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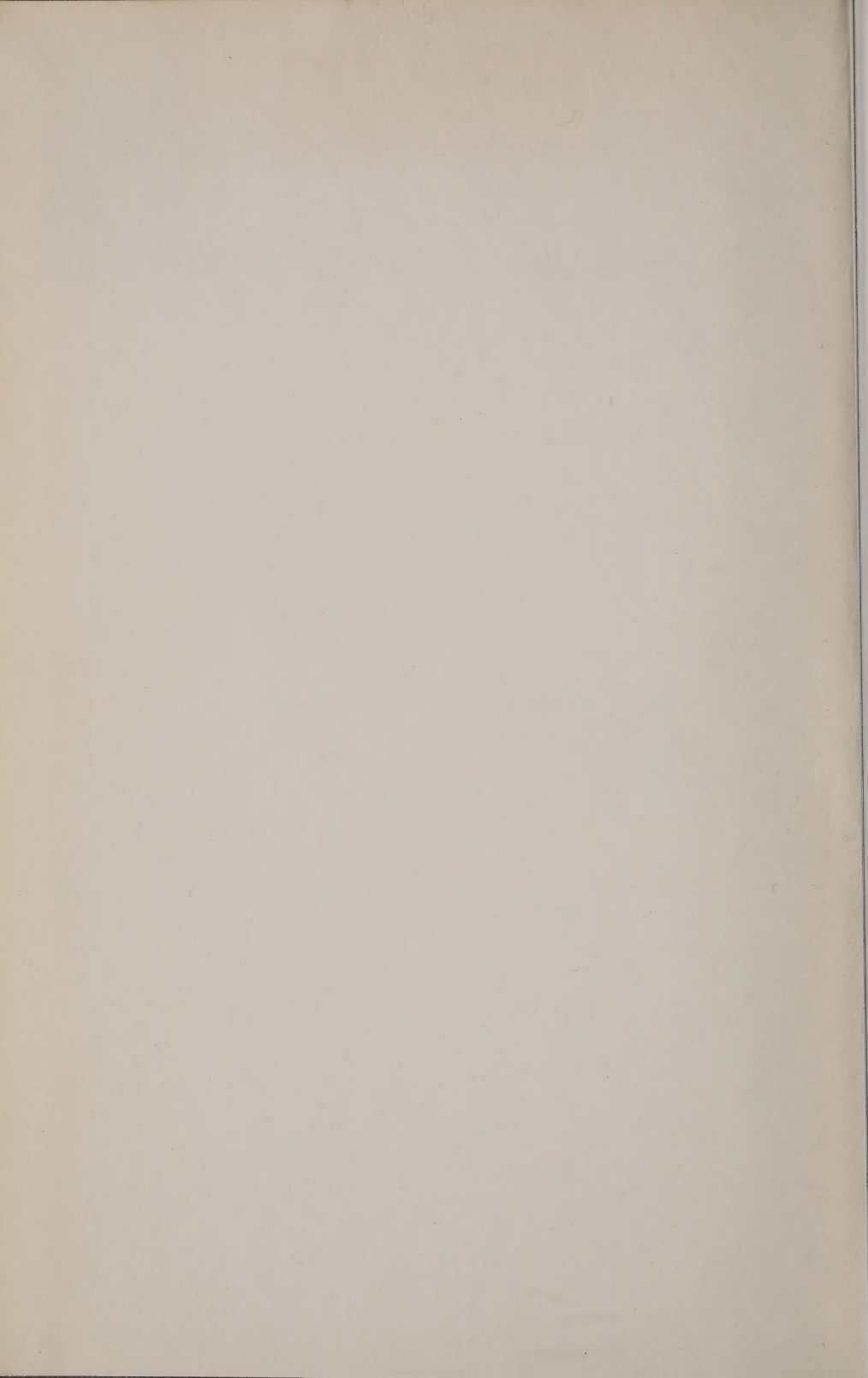
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# THE Chattanooga Country

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## THE CHATTANOOGA COUNTRY

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and history of the country, as far as it is known, is given in this volume. The author has endeavored to give a full and complete account of the country, and to show the influence of the various factors which have shaped its development. The work is intended to be a valuable reference for the student and the traveler.

CHAS. HILL  
The University of North Carolina Press



*In Memory of*

GEORGE THOMAS HUNTER

Favored by America's opportunities, he expressed his gratitude and confidence in the future by creation of the Benwood Foundation which has enriched immeasurably the civilizing influences of the Chattanooga country.



THE  
*Chattanooga Country*  
1540 - 1962

FROM TOMAHAWKS TO TVA

By GILBERT E. GOVAN *and*  
JAMES W. LIVINGOOD



CHAPEL HILL  
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA PRESS

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## *Foreword*

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THE name of Chattanooga preserves the memory of Red Men, who used the trails and the waters of the river which flows by the modern city. To many Americans, it is associated with a terrible campaign of America's civil war and with the Tennessee Valley Authority. But to most people, it is possibly known only because writers of popular songs have linked it with a "choo-choo" and a shoeshine boy. As a geographic gateway, surrounded by an important supporting country, it deserves to be known and understood as a center of American history and development.

Too frequently in the past historians have been slow in recognizing the role of local history. Content with other themes, they have left the local largely in the hands of genealogists and amateurs, whose intent was good but whose vistas were usually narrow. It is the purpose of the authors to attempt something more than the provincial study of a few local acres. Our goal has been to examine the many experiences of the people of the Chattanooga region in the light of local, state and national events and to see how they were influenced by or contributed to the greater stream of history. In other words, the region is studied as a microcosm of America.

Change has been the common denominator of the story. With dramatic suddenness, the Indian gave way to the white settlers as late as 1838. The technological advances of the last century have pushed the regional horizons first this way and then that. Since the people of the area were constantly augmented by newcomers from other sections, growth within it was constantly enriched by their fresh contributions. Chattanooga, which was and still is smaller than its importance would indicate, reflects within itself interesting phases

of this changing pattern, although its appealing scenic surroundings stand unaltered.

Struggle, crisis and decision are familiar in the area. But through the decades, the people of the region have stood "steady in their shoes," with typical American faith in themselves and in their future.

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### *Preface to the Revised Edition*

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THE University of Chattanooga finds deep satisfaction in the role it has in the republication of *The Chattanooga Country*. Originally published in 1952, this volume enjoyed favorable comment from the critics and an active market. Later the authors donated their rights to the book to the University along with their pledge of assistance to see it through revision and enlargement.

The second edition contains a new chapter which brings the story up to date, a group of splendid illustrations not included in the first printing, and some corrections of the original text. The authors have both been associated with the University of Chattanooga for better than a quarter of a century. Dr. Gilbert Govan, Librarian Emeritus, served for some twenty-eight years before his retirement last year. He is the literary editor of *The Chattanooga Times*. Dr. James W. Livingood is Guerry Professor of History and Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. To them, the University is grateful.

These scholars have woven a colorful tapestry of the rich history of the region. As president of the University of Chattanooga, I find it a rare opportunity to make their book available again to readers everywhere.

LEROY A. MARTIN

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THE CHATTANOOGA COUNTRY

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## CHAPTER I

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### *"Mountains-Looking-at-Each-Other"*

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IN the spring of 1818, a party of traveling missionaries, visitors to a newly established mission to the Cherokee Indians in the wild, forest area of southeast Tennessee, climbed the "Look-Out mountain." As they wound their way up the trail, they found the earlier part fairly easy, but as they neared the top, they were confronted by a "pallisade of naked rocks, from seventy to one hundred feet" in height. They discovered, however, that the trail proceeded through a break which the elements had created, and Indian and animal had worn into a usable path. On reaching the top, the travelers turned their horses in the direction of Lookout Point, overlooking the Tennessee River. They skirted the heavy thickets which crowded under the frequent taller oaks and pines. When they neared the Point, they tethered their tired horses and scrambled down the rocks to stand on the jutting forehead of the mountain, and to drink in the details of the "grand picturesque scenery," which lay before them. Immediately, all the hardships of the journey were forgotten.

Elias Cornelius, a young Congregationalist minister, was a member of the party. He was a graduate of Yale University and had a strong liking for natural beauty. Later, he conveyed his impressions of the scene to paper with effective simplicity. "The summit of the Look-Out mountain," he wrote, "overlooks the whole country. And to those who can be delighted with the view of an interminable forest,

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penetrated by the windings of a bold river, interspersed with hundreds of verdant prairies and broken by many ridges and mountains, furnishes, in the month of May, a landscape which yields to few others in extent, variety, or beauty. Even the aborigines had not been insensible to its charms; for in the name which they have given to the Look-Out mountain we have a laconic, but very striking description of the scenery. This name, in the Cherokee language, without the aspirated sounds, is *O-tullē-ton-tannā-ta-kunnā-ēē*; literally, 'mountains looking at each other.'"<sup>1</sup>

Framing this panorama on the west, the visitors observed a succession of mountain ranges, which compositely make up the Cumberlandlands. They stood on one of the two long ridges which form the eastern front of these mountains. Lookout Mountain extends approximately eighty miles from the Tennessee River southwestward into Alabama, while from almost the same spot Walden's Ridge runs in a northeastwardly direction across the state of Tennessee. The origin of the name, Lookout, is not known, although two legends persist about it. One is that the dominant position, noted by Cornelius, made it a natural "lookout," from which to view the surrounding country. The other is that the mountain stood as a warning to early navigators, who on seeing it realized they were nearing the rough water of the river just below. Walden's Ridge commemorates one of the early long hunters, Elisha Walden,<sup>2</sup> who ventured into the Tennessee country as early as the 1760's.

The dimly outlined peaks, which the travelers saw upon the horizon far to the east, are outlying portions of the Appalachian ranges which lie as a barrier between Tennessee and North Carolina. Strangely, some of the tributaries of the Tennessee River rise on the eastern side of these mountains and flow through them in wild, rocky canyons. These gorges were arduous gateways for moving men, but nevertheless they were used by Indian, hunter, soldier, and settler, each in his turn.

<sup>1</sup> Elias Cornelius, "Tour in Virginia, Tennessee, etc., etc., etc.," in Phillips, *New Voyages and Travels*, III, 103.

<sup>2</sup> Walden appears variously in the early records as Walling, Wallins, Walding, Wallen, and Walden.



## “Mountains-Looking-at-Each-Other”

The valley of the Tennessee lies between these two mountain areas. However, this valley is only one by comparison with the consistent heights which form its boundaries, as scattered through it are a succession of smaller ridges. This gigantic washboard pattern inspired the mythmaking imagination of the Cherokees, who attempted to explain its origin in this fashion:

At first the earth was flat and very soft and wet. The animals were anxious to get down (from above in Galunlati, beyond the arch) and sent out different birds to see if it was yet dry, but they found no place to alight and came back again to Galunlati. At last, it seemed to be time, and they sent out the Buzzard and told him to go and make ready for them. This was the Great Buzzard, the father of all the buzzards we see now. He flew all over the earth, low down near the ground, and it was still soft. When he reached the Cherokee country, he was very tired, and his wings began to flap and strike the ground, and wherever they struck the earth there was a valley, and where they turned up again there was a mountain. When the animals above saw this, they were afraid that the whole world would be mountains, so they called him back, but the Cherokee country remains full of mountains to this day.<sup>3</sup>

The efforts of geologists to explain the same circumstances are more factual and not so appealing as the romantic Indian version, but the variety of formations has made the area a rich laboratory for them. Similarly, the “interminable forests” and “verdant prairies,” observed by Cornelius, made the section one of the greatest flora collecting sites in all America. They contain a diversity of vegetation which attracted amateur and professional observers years before. Lieutenant Henry Timberlake, who was with the King’s armed forces in the French and Indian War, commented interestingly on numerous plants in his *Memoirs*. During the Revolutionary period, the famed William Bartram made a strenuous trip across the rugged terrain into

<sup>3</sup> James Mooney, “*Myths of the Cherokee*”, (U. S. Bureau of American Ethnology, 19th Annual Report), p. 239.

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the Cherokee country, where he reveled in the "grand forests, dark detached groves, vales and meadows."<sup>4</sup>

From where the young minister and his friends stood on Lookout Mountain, another unusual natural feature could be noted, the converging valleys which have their hub in the vicinity. They made the neighborhood a junction point for buffalo paths and Indian trails. The latter, well defined by years of usage by Red Men on the chase, on trading missions or on war ventures, threaded their way to all points of the compass. Some were of a local nature only, while others, like the Great Indian Warpath, were major routes for distant travel. But for the moment, Cornelius was more interested in the peculiarities of the river than in trails or botany.

At his feet, figuratively speaking, there was a demonstration of its strange meanderings. Here, he saw it turned back by Lookout Mountain to outline level bottom lands into the pattern of a human foot. From its very headwaters, the river follows a tortuous course. It "has dug out a somewhat devious path for itself, but being cramped for room it was obliged, like a tall man in a spare bed, to coil up," as one authority humorously commented.<sup>5</sup> When it entered the mountains, its difficulties were increased. As Cornelius described it, "Collecting its waters into a channel of seventy yards, it severs the mountain, and rushes tumultuously through the rocky defile, wafting the trembling navigator at the rate of a mile in two or three minutes." Here the river foamed, roared and boiled, as it tumbled over and against great boulders in its effort to find a way to the sea. Pioneer boatmen, who ventured through this stretch of bad water, gave colorful names to

<sup>4</sup> William Bartram, *The Travels of William Bartram*, edited by Mark Van Doren, pp. 272 ff.

Henry Timberlake, *Memoirs, 1756-1765*, edited by Samuel Cole Williams. In a note on page 70, Judge Williams states: "Asa Gray, the celebrated botanist, said that he found a greater variety of trees within a day's tramp in the Great Smoky Mountains than are native to all Europe; the number of varieties is placed at 136."

A recent writer, Rutherford Platt, says that the region contains the world's richest and most varied forest, centering around Chattanooga. Rutherford Platt, *Our Flowering World*, p. 217.

<sup>5</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, June 12, 1877, quoting Major W. R. King, U. S. Engineers.

## “Mountains-Looking-at-Each-Other”

the worst spots, such as the Suck or the Boiling Pot, the Skillet, the Frying Pan, and the Tumbling Shoals.<sup>6</sup>

This mountain stretch was one of two major deterrents to navigation on the Tennessee. On downstream, the river again encountered geological conditions which created extremely rough waters. This was the Muscle Shoals, where navigation was more difficult than in the mountains. Even in its more quiet sections, frequent bars, ledges, and uncertainty of depth, which resulted from seasonal variations in rainfall, limited the use of the stream as a major highway by traders and pioneers. Donald Davidson aptly says, “To get up and down the Tennessee, one needed not only to combine the virtues of the horse and the alligator but add something of the frog, the snapping turtle, raccoon, buffalo, and shikepoke.”<sup>7</sup>

There are many stories about the difficulties encountered in the turbulent mountain section of the river. One of the best was recorded by a visitor in 1857, David Hunter Strothers, who wrote for *Harper's Magazine* under the pen name Porte Crayon. It was told him by a

<sup>6</sup> This section of the Tennessee River was widely known and attracted the attention of a variety of commentators, some of whom exaggerated its proportions in their descriptions. Thomas Jefferson in his *Notes on Virginia*, wrote: “Above the Chickamogga towns is a whirlpool called the Sucking-pot, which takes in trunks of trees or boats, and throws them out again half a mile below. It is avoided by keeping very close to the bank on the south side.” *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, II, 14.

W. Winterbotham, in a book published in London in 1795, said: “. . . it is reckoned a greater curiosity than the bursting of the Potomack through the Blue ridge. The river, which a few miles above is half a mile wide, is here compressed to the width of about one hundred yards; just as it enters the mountain, a large rock projects from the northern side in an oblique direction, which renders the bed of the river still narrower, and causes a sudden bend; the water of the river is, of course, thrown with great rapidity against the southern shore, whence it bounds round the point of a rock and produces the whirl, which it about 80 yards in circumference. Canoes have often been carried into this whirl and escaped by the dexterity of the rowers without damage.” William Winterbotham, *An Historical, Geographical, Commercial, and Philosophical View of the American United States and of the European Settlements in America and the West Indies*, III, 227.

<sup>7</sup> Donald Davidson, *The Tennessee, the Old River*, p. 7.



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local riverman, who had been once engaged by a down-river traveler as a pilot.

I never been through there the [the boatman related], but I had heard people talk about the Skillet and the Slick, and the Bilin' Pot, and all that; and I thought I could shoot her through, and if I sunk her I'd lose my money—that's all. So we tuck a few drinks and put off, and I takes the steerin'-oar and put her head down, and let her rip. Night come on pretty soon, but that was all the same to me; so we tuck a few more drinks, and let her slide. And we went over some rough places, and, after while, come to a pretty smart current runnin' smooth. "Now she goes it slick as goose-grease!" says he to me. So, by-and-by, we see lights on the shore, and passed by a house where a feller was playin' 'Old Zip Coon' like a saw-mill, and people dancin'. "Here's good fun to you!" says he, and we tuck another dig. So we went on pretty sprightly; and, by jingo, before we got well out sight and hearin' of that house we went past another, whar' they were dancin' to the same tune. "Success to 'em!" says I. "Hand us the bottle; while fun is goin', we might as well have our share." So we drank a mouthful, and before we were done talking about it we went past another place, fiddlin' and dancin' like the rest.

"Mister," says he to me, "this there's the jolliest settlement ever I traveled through—allagoing it to the same tune." "Pears to me," says I, "I hear another fiddle and fellers a laffin'"; and presently sure enough we streaked past another house whar they were goin' it a leetle more extravagant then the others—tune about the same. "Mister," says the boss to me, "this rather beats my time. Do the people along this river mostly spend their nights fiddlin' and dancin'?" "Certain," says I; "that's their regular business." But now, I tell you, I was beginnin' to get bewildered and oneasy myself. So, pretty soon we passed another house, and another, and another, all dancin' and fiddlin' like blazes. The boss he set quiet, and didn't say a word for a while, but tuck a swig now and then. Next house we passed they were goin' it on Old Zip Coon with a will. Then the boss spoke up. "Pilot," says he, "there's one of two things—either we're drunk, or there's hell's doin's goin' on along this river tonight." "What time o' night is it?" says I. "About two o'clock in the mornin' by the stars," says he. "How many houses have we passed?" "I've counted nine," says he, and his voice began to shake a little. "Now," says he, "it might be that hellish thing is a follerin' of us!" "Nine," says I, "is the devil's number," says I, pretty badly skeered: "if the thing appears agin, go call your wife, and if she can't see if, we're drunk, certain." "Listen!" says he; "don't you hear 'm? thar's the light! ten times! we're drunk, sure, Katy! Katy! sweetheart, wake up!"

This time I headed the flat a little nearer shore, and we could hear 'em playin, cussin' and swearin'!

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“Katy,” says the boss, “do you see or hear anything over there on shore?”

“I see lights,” says she, “and hear a passel of drunken boatmen dancin’ Old Zip Coon.”

I want to put in, but boss says “No; but sure’s I’m a man, if they’re carryin’ on at the next house we pass we’ll tie up and make out the night with ’em!”

In about half an hour, as I expected, we came upon another spree.

“Head her in!” says he. So we tied up at the landing and went in the house.

Now, stranger, how do you think it was? Why, this was old Jack Cogles’ house, down thar fornense the Bilin’ Pot, whar some fellers and some gals were dancin’ all night; and we went bilin’ around and around passin’ by the same place over and over agin! Now at fust it come to me like a sort of a dream; then it was all clare; and without waitin’ to be cussed or laughed at, I streaked it. But it’s all true, jist as I tell ye.<sup>8</sup>

The imagination of the Cherokees was also stirred by the exciting great whirlpool in the canyon of the Tennessee. In their story about Untsaiyi, the gambler, they described the origin of the Suck as being a consequence of the time when his neighbor, Thunder, and the latter’s wife boiled their son with a mess of roots to heal him of a skin eruption. They threw the whole concoction, including the boy and the pot, into the river. A great cloud of steam arose, out of which the boy emerged, healed of his affliction, and, the myth continues, “ever since there is an eddy there that we call Untiguhi, ‘Pot-in-the-water.’”

In another of their interesting myths, the Cherokees described the effect of the Suck upon would-be navigators of the stream:

It happened once that two men, going down the river in a canoe, as they came near this place saw the water circling rapidly ahead of them. They pulled up to the bank to wait until it became smooth again, but the whirlpool seemed to approach with wider and wider circles, until they were drawn into the vortex. They were thrown out of the canoe and carried down under the water, where one man was seized by a great fish and was never seen again. The other was taken round and round, down to the very lowest center of the whirlpool, when another circle caught him and bore him outward and upward until he was finally thrown up again to the sur-

<sup>8</sup> David Hunter Strothers, (Porte Crayon, pseud.), “A Winter in the South,” *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine*, XVII (August, 1858), 302-303.

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face and floated out in the shallow water, whence he made his escape to shore. He told afterwards that when he reached the narrowest circle of the maelstrom the water seemed to open below him and he could look down as through the roof beams of a house, and there on the bottom of the river he had seen a great company of people, who looked up and beckoned to him to join them, but as they put up their hands to seize him the swift current caught him and took him out of their reach.<sup>9</sup>

The Cherokees were, themselves, comparatively latecomers to the valley, according to the students who investigated aboriginal town-sites along the river. Dallas Island, now submerged beneath the waters of Chickamauga Lake near Chattanooga, was one of the most thoroughly explored areas. There, evidences were found of one of the earliest people in the region. They have been called the Dallas people from the name of the island. These early inhabitants "were the most skillful artisans of Tennessee's prehistoric population." Their pottery was of many shapes and designs, and was highly decorated. They made tools from animals bones, and the craftsmanship they showed "in articles made from ocean shells . . . represents one of the highest artistic accomplishments of the American Indian." They excelled in weaving and knew the art of working in copper.<sup>10</sup> The full details of these people and in fact for the whole period down to the seventeenth century are clouded in the mists of legend and tradition. The Dallas people were a part of the great Muskhogean tribe, of whom the best known are the Creeks. Undoubtedly the Indians who were encountered by De Soto, when in 1540 he and his followers toilsomly made their way through the untracked wilderness across mountain range and river, were of this stock.

Fernando De Soto was one of the intrepid conquistadors of the Old World who were attracted to the New by missionary zeal, lure of adventure, and easy wealth. Disembarking from their ships in Florida, De Soto and his approximately 700 followers struck out into

<sup>9</sup> Mooney; *op. cit.*, pp. 312 and 347.

<sup>10</sup> Knox County Historical Committee, East Tennessee Historical Society, *The French Broad-Holston Country*, pp. 7-9. This material is based on the work of Professor T. M. N. Lewis, of the University of Tennessee, who superintended the excavations of the prehistoric peoples of the valley, made in co-operation with the Tennessee Valley Authority. Since the Dallas people buried their dead with accumulations of their possessions, these excavations proved to be very rich in their disclosures of the life of these early inhabitants of the valley.



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the interior, after taking possession of the territory in the name of the crown of Spain on June 3, 1539. It was just a year later when “they came to a pine wood on the stream,” which according to the findings of the United States De Soto Expedition Commission was very close to the boundaries of the present Chattanooga. The year which had elapsed had been filled with toil and danger past any conception of the members of the party. They came with horses and swine, animals hitherto unknown to the Indians; they came with guns and tools of iron and found themselves among a people still of the Stone Age. They crossed towering mountain ranges and forded rapid streams. Some of the areas through which they passed contained little sustenance for either men or beasts. Occasionally they had to fight against natives who would not receive them as demigods as others did.

They reached the Tennessee Valley along the headwaters of the Hiwassee River. From there they struck overland to the Tennessee which they first viewed from the top of one of the mountain ridges. On Friday the third of June, 1540, they reached the pine woods, already mentioned, and were there met by a group of “peaceful Indians from Chiaha.” The next day they moved on to the town of Chiaha, now placed definitely on Burns or Long Island in the Tennessee River where it goes out of Tennessee into Alabama. “We were detained,” says Biedma, one of the four chroniclers of the expedition, “twenty-six or twenty-seven days to refresh the horses, which arrived greatly fatigued, having worked hard and eaten little.”

The Spaniards made the best of the opportunity also, for, according to Ranjel, one of the others who kept a journal:

The Indians spent fifteen days with the Christians in peace, and they played with them, and likewise among themselves. They swam with the Christians and helped them very much in every way. They ran away afterwards, on Saturday, the nineteenth of the month, for something that the Governor asked of them; and, in short, it was because he asked for women. The next day in the morning the Governor sent to call the chief and he came immediately; and the next day the Governor took him off with him to make his people come back, and the result was they came back. In the land of Chiaha was where the Spaniards first found fenced villages.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *Final Report of the United States De Soto Expedition Commission*, pp. 139, 190, 191, 201, 202, 208.

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On Monday, June 28, the Spanish left and thus the first white men ever to see the Chattanooga area passed without making any mention of the remarkable grouping of mountains, river, and plain, which virtually every other traveler in historical times has commented upon. But if the area made little impression on them, they left little on it. The Indians appear to have developed no legends or traditions based upon the visit of the Europeans. Engaged in their own tribal warfare, they apparently largely forgot the strange guests they entertained.<sup>12</sup>

Creek and Cherokee tramped the trails and used the rivers on the southern shoulder of the Appalachian Mountains for generations. Fluctuations of war and vague Indian boundaries placed the Chattanooga locale within disputed territory, but by the beginning of the eighteenth century, Creek place names and townsites alone served as a reminder of their claim to the treacherous mountain shoals and rapids at the base of Lookout Mountain.

Some of these names have plagued white men in search of meanings for years. The Cherokees were as greatly puzzled by them, as they had usually retained the names by which the streams and places were known when they came permanently into the area. The white men were more ingenious and invented meanings frequently to suit their fancy. For example, there is Chickamauga, the name of the stream on which was fought one of the bloodiest battles in human history.

<sup>12</sup> Though no Indian legends exist, four old rock and earth works, three of which are still to be seen, have led to a number of speculative stories among later inhabitants. One is near Mentone, Alabama, on Lookout Mountain; another is on Fort Mountain, near Chatsworth, Georgia; a third is between the branches of the Duck River, near Manchester, Tennessee; and the fourth was on the Hiwassee River, in an area now covered by the Chickamauga Lake. John Sevier observed some of these on his expedition of 1782, and asked the old Indian chief Oconostota, if he could explain them. Oconostota said, "It was handed down by the Forefathers that the works had been made by the white people who had formerly inhabited the Country. . . ." He also said that he had heard that the people were called Welsh. This account has led some to associate these people with the legendary stories of Madoc, the Welshman, who is said to have led an expedition to America in the twelfth century. Other stories attribute the construction to members of the De Soto party. Samuel Cole Williams, *Dawn of Tennessee Valley and Tennessee History*, pp. 441-443. See also Zella Armstrong; *Who Discovered America?*

## “Mountains-Looking-at-Each-Other”

Not knowing the real origin of the word, men quickly came to the belief that it meant “river of death,” and so it was proclaimed to generations of Americans, who realized only too well the fitness of the definition. Actually, the word is a combination of two Creek words, *cukko* and *micco*, the dwelling place of the war chief. Similarly, Chattanooga, the aboriginal name for Lookout Mountain, was given multiple meanings. Most prominent of these, possibly was “hawk’s nest” or “eagle’s nest,” although actually Chattanooga is a phonetic rendering of “Chado-na-ugsa,” a Creek phrase which translated means “rock that comes to a point.”

Tennessee is not yet satisfactorily explained. Again, the Cherokees, who used it freely, disclaim any knowledge of its meaning or origin. Nearly all students accept the idea that it comes from the name of an Indian village which was located on the Little Tennessee. The spelling of this place name varies on the old maps, as is true of most others of the period. On one it appears as *Tanase*, while others have it *Tenassee*, *Tannassee*, and *Tunisee*. The modern spelling was first used about the middle of the eighteenth century, although a consistent use of it did not come for many years.<sup>13</sup> Most authorities state that the origin and meaning are lost. But one student, having the example of the Creek origin of other place names, believes that Tennessee is another combination of Creek words, meaning old town, *talua* and *ahassee*, which under the influence of the Cherokees and the whites took on the form from which the modern name developed. At first, confined to the Little Tennessee River, the name was extended to the main stream late in the eighteenth century.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Timberlake, *op. cit.*, p. 55. In an editorial note, Judge Williams calls attention to the spelling of the word by Timberlake in 1765 as the first use of the modern form. Davidson, *op. cit.*, p. 39, states that the present spelling was first used in 1754 by the Governor of South Carolina.

<sup>14</sup> J. P. Brown, *Old Frontiers*, pp. 528, 545, and 546. Brown has been followed for the meaning of the place names. For a discussion of the application of Tennessee to the river, see Davidson *op. cit.*, pp. 38 and 39, and Tennessee Valley Authority: *A History of Navigation on the Tennessee River System*, pp. 1, 2, 159, 160. A variety of names have been used for the river by the Indians, French, and British. Most commonly encountered were *Hoggehego*, which also appears under a number of other spellings, and the *Cherokee*.





## CHAPTER II

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### *International Intrigue and War*

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EARLY explorations of the southern mountain region of eastern North America were made simultaneously by the English and French. They found it dominated by the Cherokee Indians. The Cherokees claimed, according to Indian custom, great areas with vague limits, although there were fluctuations in the boundaries because of tribal wars. Generally speaking, the approximately 40,000 square miles of the Cherokee country extended from the interlocking headwaters of the Kanawha and Tennessee rivers southward to approximately the southern edge of the foothills of the Appalachians, and on the west from the Tennessee River in its northward course to the Ohio to the eastern piedmont of the Carolinas.

Although mountain coves and peaks were a part of the hunting ground of the Cherokees and thereby aided in creating the sentimental attachment the Indians felt for their country, they built their homes along the streams. Their principal towns were scattered along the upper reaches of the Savannah, the Hiwassee, and Tuckasegee rivers, and along the whole course of the Little Tennessee to its mouth. On the latter some miles before it joins with the main Tennessee River, they located Echota, the beloved peace town which was usually considered the capital of the nation.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mooney, *op. cit.*, pp. 14 and 21.

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In the sixty-four villages, found by the trader, James Adair, in 1735, there were, he estimated, 16,000 to 17,000 Indians.<sup>2</sup> About thirty years later, Henry Timberlake visited the Cherokees and described interestingly their appearance. He wrote in his *Memoirs*:

The Cherokees, are of a middle stature, of an olive colour, tho' generally painted, and their skins stained with gun-powder, pricked into it in very pretty figures. The hair of their head is shaved, tho' many of the old people have it plucked out by the roots, except a patch on the hinder part of the head, about twice the bigness of a crown-piece, which is ornamented with beads, feathers, wampum, stained deers' hair, and such like baubles. . . .

They that can afford it wear a collar of wampum, which are beads cut out of clam-shells, a silver breast-plate, and bracelets on their arms and wrists of the same metal, a bit of cloth over their private parts, a shirt of the English make, a sort of cloth-boots, and mockasons, which are shoes of a make peculiar to the Americans, ornamented with porcupine-quills; a large mantle or matchcoat thrown over all compleats their dress at home; but when they go to war they leave their trinkets behind, and the mere necessities serve them. . . . Both men and women were streight and well-built, with small hands and feet.<sup>3</sup>

The Cherokees held the balance of power in the old Southwest for a long time because of their geographic advantages, but their loosely knit tribal organization was a constant source of weakness. It allowed astute and often unscrupulous negotiators to divide the tribe against its own best interests. From the earliest encroachments by Europeans to 1838, the Cherokees were the victims, not only of the desires and manipulations of white men, but were also driven to great conflict among themselves in their confused efforts to defeat the purpose of their antagonists. They were an intelligent people, and, despite the political network which enmeshed them, they developed into one of the most highly civilized of American Indian tribes. This progress fortified their desire to live among their native mountains and rivers, and rendered their futile struggle even more tragic.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the mountain area of the Cherokees stood as a barrier to westward advancement from the

<sup>2</sup> James Adair, *History of the American Indian*, edited by Samuel Cole Williams, p. 238.

<sup>3</sup> Timberlake, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-77.

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English communities along the coast. At first, the width of the coastal plain offered plenty of land for settlement without bringing the whites into contact with the Indian mountaineers. The French *coureur de bois* likewise had millions of acres that were more accessible than the Cherokee region, which was guarded from early French ingress from the Mississippi Valley by the Muscle Shoals. Although the irresistible lure of Indian trade was felt by both French and British, it was not until the early years of the eighteenth century that the domain of the Cherokees became a theater for the extending competition of the two advancing European groups. Indians assembled at their councils in the faraway forest showed in their discussions the far-reaching influence of European power politics. Guns, powder, and shot accumulated in the villages.

The British won the early rounds of the struggle through the clever diplomacy of Sir Alexander Cuming. This Scottish baronet, acting as a self-appointed emissary, won the confidence of the Cherokees. He took a party of the leaders of the tribe to London in 1730 to meet King George II. There the Indians were impressed with the power of the vigorous empire, and pledged their allegiance to the king. The British, in order to hold their advantage and to drive out new advances, sent a party of engineers and troops from South Carolina across the mountains into the Cherokee country. In 1756, they built Fort Loudoun on the Little Tennessee, near Echota. Although other forts had been constructed prior to this time, they were closer to the white settlements. Fort Loudoun brought the English into the center of the Cherokee lands. From it they hoped to control the region and attract braves to fight with them under the Union Jack.

But the erection of the fort was not sufficient to hold the disintegrating affections of the Indians. Shaken by the French and Indian War which had broken out with French victories in 1754, Cherokee trust in the English grew less. Rivalry between the colonies of Virginia and North Carolina over western policy and the presence of many unscrupulous English traders brought misgivings. Moreover, the British always insisted on establishing boundaries which the Indians disliked, while the French never talked of land purchases or surveyors' lines. French agents, conforming to Indian ways and with

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"familiar politeness," precipitated this climate of dissatisfaction into squally times along the Tennessee Valley. Open ingratitude by the English colonials, despite Cherokee assistance to the British cause, coupled with the physical mistreatment by unthinking backwoodsmen, brought the Cherokees to the breaking point. The garrison at Fort Loudoun was attacked by them and forced to surrender on August 7, 1760, amid scenes of Indian revenge.

Flushed with their victory, the Cherokees immediately notified the French about it. Governor Kerleric at New Orleans decided to accept the Indians' invitation to take possession of the abandoned fort at once. Boats were loaded with stores and gifts and the long circuitous river journey up the Mississippi, Ohio, and the Tennessee began. On reaching the rough waters of the Tennessee's mountain canyon, the party decided against an effort to proceed farther. "It appeared so shocking and unsurmountable to the monsieurs, that after staying there a considerable time in the vain expectation of seeing some of their friends, necessity forced them to return back to New Orleans, about 2,600 computed miles, to their inconsolable disappointment."<sup>4</sup>

Colonial retaliation followed the fall of Fort Loudoun. The settlers in northeastern Tennessee "pushed the frontier seventy miles farther to the west." The Cherokees accepted again relations with the British, which were to last until after the latter's defeat in the American Revolution. New British deputies were sent to the Nation after the close of the French and Indian War. Among these was John McDonald, who arrived in Charleston, South Carolina, at the age of nineteen in 1766 from his home in Inverness, Scotland. He soon made his way to Savannah where he clerked in a mercantile house, which carried on important trade with the Indians. His employers sent him beyond the mountains to the Cherokee towns in the valley of the Little Tennessee River. Here, he married Ann Shorey, the daughter of an earlier trader, William Shorey, and an Indian woman. As was the Cherokee custom, McDonald was then accepted into the tribe. His business

<sup>4</sup> Adair, *op. cit.*, p. 287. This temporary outpost of the French has been used by some students as an explanation of the "Old French Store," which appears on some of the early maps of the Chattanooga area.



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activities soon took him to the less populated country around Lookout Mountain, where game was plentiful and important Indian trails intersected. The spot he chose to erect his trading post was near the mouth of the South Chickamauga Creek, where the Great War and Trading Path crossed the stream. From this new locality, trader McDonald also found time to carry on his activities as a British agent.

With England in control of the land between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi River after 1763, the pressure from the frontiersmen on the border became irresistible. Although the British proclamation of 1763 said that this region was to be Indian country, the inrush of settlers, who had fought to drive out the French and had braved Indian peril, could not be stopped by an imaginary line or the diplomatic agreements of British agents. Frontiersmen didn't care for officials or tact. A number of treaties calling for land sales were forced from the Cherokees before the American Revolution while some whites moved on the Indian lands without the formality of purchase.<sup>5</sup>

Chief among the private attempts to acquire land was the Henderson treaty made at Sycamore Shoals in 1775. By it the Cherokees ceded their claims to the entire tract between the Ohio River and the southern watershed of the Cumberland together with the Watauga area. This private treaty, which was in complete opposition to British policy, was signed by the North Carolina land speculator, Judge Richard Henderson, for the Transylvania Company, on the advice of the famous scout, Daniel Boone, and James Robertson, border leader of Watauga. The older Indian chiefs, who appeared to fear a renewal of war with the whites, unanimously agreed to this sale which included much of their best hunting grounds. But one of the younger braves rose in protest. In defiance, pockmarked, muscular, and impressive Tsu-gun-sini, the Dragging Canoe, left the meeting with a band of loyal followers saying to the whites as a token of warning: "You have bought a fair land, but will find its settlement dark and bloody."

<sup>5</sup> The most prominent example of the violation of the proclamation was the settlement on the Watauga, which began about 1768 and grew, first, into the Watauga Association and then the Washington District of North Carolina.

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Friction between the backwoodsmen and the Cherokees broke into open hostilities again as the American Revolution began. Parties of warriors ravaged the settlements; rewards were offered for Indian scalps by the government of South Carolina while many of the important towns of the Nation were destroyed in a campaign in 1776. The older chiefs placed the blame for this new trouble on Dragging Canoe, but the agents attempted to organize the Indians to fight in the British cause. Alexander Cameron, who was resident deputy with the Cherokees and had won the affection of many of them, announced that no town which traded with the Colonists would receive supplies or ammunition from the English. Despite this, a majority of the Indians appeared to wish peace and were willing to cede their lands. Dragging Canoe determined, however, to pursue his course of vigorous opposition. Supported by many of the younger men in the Nation, he decided to leave those who counseled appeasement.

In the spring of 1777, he and his followers withdrew from their native valley of the Little Tennessee to the area where the British agent McDonald had established headquarters, practically within the shadow of the "Great Lookout or Chattanooga Mountain." Old townsites or existing villages were taken over by the immigrants. Dragging Canoe knew the country well, as he had often hunted over it in the past, and chose Chickamauga near the McDonald home for his headquarters. Another group established themselves at an old townsite at the mouth of a small stream and named it for the place they had left, Settico. Those who had migrated from Toque established a village with that name; Little Owl, brother of the Canoe, selected a site upstream on Chickamauga Creek near the present Graysville, Georgia.<sup>6</sup> By the end of 1778, some one thousand warriors had joined ranks with the defiant Dragging Canoe, who was also supported by some of the principal chiefs. Although they maintained ties with the more peaceful element of the Cherokees, this band followed a virtually independent course. Brought together in protest over the loss of their lands, their organization was never closely knit and fluctuated according to the temper of the times. However, con-

<sup>6</sup> Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 163. This volume has been followed generally for the Chickamauga period.

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temporaries and later historians frequently refer to them mistakenly as a tribe, which had completely seceded from the Cherokee Nation.

Because of his determined position, which the Indians interpreted as proper patriotism, Dragging Canoe soon won recognition as the most powerful Indian leader in the old Southwest. The Chickamauga towns flourished and became the headquarters for the British south of the Ohio River, with McDonald's store serving as a distributing point for their supplies.

This area was separated from the frontier settlements by broken country; geography lent its space to the protection of the Chickamaugas in their new towns. Stores to carry on the war against the frontier moved in from Pensacola. On one occasion a pack of 300 horses carried goods valued at 20,000 pounds to John McDonald to be used by the Chickamaugas. Armed with these materials, numerous small raiding parties quietly stole forth under Dragging Canoe's direction to burn and scalp on the frontier of Virginia, the Carolinas, Kentucky, and Ohio. As the seriousness of this rear attack became felt by the southern colonies they moved against the Chickamaugas.

In the spring of 1779, a joint force of Virginians and North Carolinians, under the command of Colonel Evan Shelby, assembled on the banks of the Holston River in northeastern Tennessee, then still a part of North Carolina, to build boats to use in an invasion of the Indian stronghold. Although only limited funds for the campaign were raised and these on the personal security of the leader's father, a considerable force was gathered. In canoes and pirogues, they descended the Tennessee on the April freshet to Chickamauga Creek. Leaving their boats, the diversely clothed troops waded through a swampy canebrake and were upon the town of Dragging Canoe before any alarm was sounded. As a large number of the warriors were away on a raiding expedition, only a brief engagement followed which provided a delaying action for the escape of the women and children. Within the next two weeks, Shelby's men burned eleven towns in the area without further opposition. Horses, cattle, and supplies were taken along with the British war material and the personal collection of furs that John McDonald had at Chickamauga.

Some of Shelby's men withdrew across the Tennessee and began



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their homeward trek on foot. On the way back to the settlements they followed the Ohio and Great Lakes Trail, which ran close to the eastern side of Walden's Ridge.<sup>7</sup> The other members of the invading party under Colonel John Montgomery and Captain James Shelby, son of Colonel Evan Shelby, floated on down the Tennessee to join George Rogers Clark in his campaigns in the old Northwest.<sup>8</sup> The expedition against the Chickamaugas under Shelby thus joined in a minor way with the more important campaign of Clark's forces to defeat the British-Indian plan for a pincer movement against the western border.

The Shelby attack on the Chickamauga towns was, however, a success without a victory. The Indian loss of manpower was negligible. Their spring crops had not been planted, and some of the destroyed towns were shortly rebuilt. The British deputy, Cameron, soon reappeared with a company of Tories, and more supplies were brought over the trails from Pensacola. The Chickamaugas mobilized for an attack but were thwarted by a counterblow struck in the fall of 1780 under the command of Colonel John Sevier.

Handsome, easy-mannered John Sevier was a natural leader of men. Known as "Nolichucky Jack," he became almost a legendary figure among his people, being the best shot and the hardest rider west of the mountains. His capacities were recognized and deferred to by his fellows, whether against the Indians in battle or in the political discussions attendant the problems precipitated between Virginia and North Carolina by the settlement at Watauga. After the boundary between the two colonies was finally surveyed, Watauga was placed definitely within the territory of North Carolina. In 1779, the area was organized as the county of Washington, and Sevier was appointed lieutenant colonel of the militia which was raised for its protection.

In the same year another decision was made that was destined to play an important role in the Chickamauga's apparently ceaseless

<sup>7</sup> The booty taken in the raid was auctioned among the men on the banks of a small creek, some thirty miles above the scene of the first engagement, and gave an historical basis for the name Sale Creek.

<sup>8</sup> Samuel Cole Williams, *Tennessee During the Revolutionary War*, pp. 93-97.



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war on the frontier. The treaty, which had been negotiated by Judge Richard Henderson and his associates at Sycamore Shoals, had not received the approval of Virginia and North Carolina. Nevertheless, Henderson continued to plan and to promote the establishment of western settlements. After the Transylvania project ended in failure, he determined to concentrate on a region within the boundaries of North Carolina's western claims. Early in 1779 he decided on French Lick and the rich lands along the Cumberland River, which had been a part of the original, attempted purchase. As this section was within the common hunting grounds of several tribes of neighboring Indians, the projected town of Nashborough seemed relatively safe from critical Chickamauga pressure. Henderson's supporters in eastern Tennessee were eager to join in the scheme to settle this "frontier island" which was far beyond the continuous settlements of the day. As the overland trail to the Cumberland from East Tennessee was hard and perilous, it was decided that John Donelson would conduct the families by boat down the Tennessee River to the Ohio and thence up the Cumberland where they would join the men who were to precede them overland.

Three days before Christmas, 1779, the voyage was begun from Fort Patrick Henry on the Holston. Because of "much delay and many difficulties" Donelson's flagship, the *Adventure*, with thirty boats in its flotilla, and 200 voyagers, did not begin its descent of the Tennessee itself, until February 27, 1780. Through the beautiful upper reaches of the river, the voyage was doubtless enlivened by the pranks of the children, among them the thirteen-year-old Rachel Donelson, later to be the beloved wife of Andrew Jackson. Strenuous times lay ahead. On March 7, they encountered heavy winds, which created a "high sea" and caused them to tie up early in the afternoon at the site of the "uppermost Chickamauga Town," then unoccupied. During this camp, a baby was born to one of the women.

For some unstated reason, the start the next morning was delayed until ten o'clock. As the boats approached the point where the river turns southward toward the towering Lookout Mountain, numerous Indian parties hailed the passengers. They appeared to be friendly, and invited the whites ashore. The latter, somewhat suspicious, drew

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up the flotilla on the opposite bank, although two of them, Donelson's son and a companion, went to meet the Indians in a canoe.

After they had gone some distance [Colonel Donelson's log of the journey says], a half-breed, who called himself Archy Coody, with several other Indians, jumped into a canoe, met them, and advised them to return to the boat, which they did, together with Coody and several canoes which left the shore and followed directly after them. They appeared to be friendly. After distributing some presents among them, with which they seemed pleased, we observed a number of Indians on the other side embarking in their canoes, armed and painted with red and black. Coody immediately made signs to his companions, ordering them to quit the boat, which they did, himself and another Indian remaining with us and telling us to move off instantly. We had not gone far before we discovered a number of Indians armed and painted proceeding down the river, as it were, to intercept us. Coody, the half-breed, and his companion, sailed with us for some time, and telling us that we had passed all the towns and were out of danger, left us. But we had not gone far until we came in sight of another town, situated likewise on the south side of the river, nearly opposite a small island. Here they again invited us to come ashore, called us brothers, and observing the boats standing off for the opposite channel, told us that "their side of the river was better for boats to pass." And here we must regret the unfortunate death of young Mr. Payne, on board Capt. Blackmore's boat, who was mortally wounded by reason of the boat running too near the northern shore opposite the town, where some of the enemy lay concealed, and the more tragical misfortune of poor Stuart, his family and friends, to the number of 28 persons. This man had embarked with us for the Western country, but his family being diseased with the smallpox, it was agreed upon him and the company that he should keep at some distance in the rear, for fear of the infection spreading, and he was warned each night when encampment should take place by the sound of a horn. After we had passed the town, the Indians, having now collected to a considerable number, observing his helpless situation, singled off from the rest of the fleet, intercepted him and killed and took prisoners the whole crew, to the great grief of the whole company, uncertain how soon they might share the same fate; their cries were distinctly heard by those boats in the rear.

We still perceived them marching down the river in considerable bodies, keeping pace with us until the Cumberland Mountain withdrew them from our sight, when we were in hopes we had escaped them. We were now arriving at the place called the Whirl or Suck, where the river is compressed

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within less than half its common width above, by the Cumberland Mountain, which juts in on both sides. In passing through the upper part of these narrows, at a place described by Coody, which he termed the "boiling pot," a trivial accident had nearly ruined the expedition. One of the company, John Cotton, who was moving down in a large canoe, had attached it to Robert Cartwright's boat, into which he and his family had gone for safety. The canoe was here overturned and the little cargo lost. The company, pitying his distress, concluded to halt and assist him in recovering his property. They had landed on the northern shore at a level spot and were going up to the place, when the Indians, to our astonishment, appeared immediately over us on the opposite cliffs, and commenced firing down upon us, which occasioned a precipitate retreat to the boats. We immediately moved off, the Indians lining the bluffs along continued their fire from the heights on our boats below, without doing any other injury than wounding four slightly. Jennings' boat is missing.

After running this twin gauntlet of enemies, the party found itself in "gentle and placid waters, where the river widened." In spite of the wounds to boats and men, they feared to stop without putting more distance between them and the Indians. They sailed all that night and the next day until midnight. Physically worn out and mentally tormented they tied up to seek rest. Shortly before daylight the next morning they heard cries, "Help poor Jennings," from up the river. When the Jennings' boat put in its appearance they heard the story of its narrow escape, after the women aboard, including the one who the night before had given birth to a baby, had by herculean efforts freed the craft from the rocks. Four of its passengers had been lost, including the baby.<sup>9</sup>

This odyssey of the Donelson party is one of the greatest in the annals of the journeys made by the frontiersmen in their dauntless efforts to reach the west. It not only exemplifies the heroism and dogged endurance of the pioneer, but it displays also the reason the Tennessee River was never used to any great degree by westward-moving Americans. The hostile attacks of the Indians, the dangers from the rapids, and the great distance it was necessary to traverse constituted almost insuperable barriers. No wonder John Donelson recorded his relief when he arrived at his destination on April 24,

<sup>9</sup> J. G. M. Ramsey, *Annals of Tennessee*, pp. 197-202, quotes the entire journal.



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1780, when families and friends were united and his responsibilities were discharged.

A serious threat to North Carolina, itself, soon required the attention of the settlers of the west. The British, having broken practically all resistance in South Carolina and Georgia, prepared to sweep northward to Virginia in the early month of 1780. North Carolina asked for help from the over-mountain men, a solicitation which posed a difficult problem for the frontier leaders, who feared that the Chickamaugas would take the opportunity for attack in their rear. But as Generals Ferguson and Tarleton continued their campaign, the frontiersmen, under the leadership of Shelby, Sevier, and William Campbell of Virginia, resolved to take the initiative. Without equipment or supplies, in hunting shirts and coonskin caps, and with no regard for danger or privation, they rode across the Smokies and struck the British troops an astonishing blow at King's Mountain on October 7, 1780. Their victory, accomplished with the assistance of riflemen from neighboring colonies, was a turning point in the Southern phase of the American Revolution.

Having cleared away this British threat, the Wataugans rode hard to recross the mountains to the unprotected frontier. They had heard that their fears about the Chickamaugas were well founded. British agents had inspired the Indians to fresh attacks upon the settlements. However, the King's Mountain men were back in the Tennessee country before the Indian campaign could get under way. After a short rest, Sevier and his followers were on the Great War Trail moving south with reinforcements from Virginia added to their numbers. After defeating the Red Men in this campaign, the frontiersmen returned to their homes for the winter months of 1780-1781, but spring found them again on the offensive, burning and destroying Indian villages. Since many Cherokees had been persuaded by British gifts and threats to join the Chickamaugas, the brunt of Sevier's campaign was borne by their closer-at-hand villages. The Indian plans to destroy Watauga were frustrated by these counterattacks, but Dragging Canoe and his British allies were not touched.

The settlers at Nashborough on the Cumberland River were also forced to carry on hostilities with the Chickamaugas, who were em-



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bittered by the fact that the white men had moved farther into their hunting ground. The war parties that went forth under Dragging Canoe's leadership gradually brought enough retaliatory measures to cause the Indians to seek a safer stronghold than was afforded by their villages to the east of Lookout Mountain. So in 1782 the Chickamauga chief and a number of lesser chieftains led their followers along the boulder strewn slopes of the Mountain where it drops off to meet the river and established new communities known as "The Five Lower Towns." The whirling waters of the Tennessee made it easy for them to prevent the use of the river; the path between the river and the mountain ranges presented a series of natural fortifications. So, practically safe from invasion from upper Tennessee, Running Water Town, Nickajack Town, Long Island Town, Crow Town, and Lookout Mountain Town, with their cabins and ball fields became the new headquarters of the wily Chickamaugas.

Dragging Canoe located at Running Water Town where new plans of attack upon the whites were brewed. Creeks, Shawnees, and Tories, who desired to take up the tomahawk under the warlike Canoe, augmented the population, while John McDonald continued to reside with them as a source of assistance. The "Five Lower Towns" became the most formidable bastion in the Old Southwest and the inhabitants won dubious renown "not only from their disposition to commit injuries on the citizens of the United States, but from their ability to perform it."<sup>10</sup> Because of their incessant raids on the frontier, their heterogeneous followers, and their merciless attacks on parties using the river, the Chickamaugas were deemed nothing more than savage banditti by the people in the stockades along the frontier and the members of the Assemblies of the Southern states whose chief interest still centered around the war with Great Britain.

By midsummer of 1782 the "Chicamoggies" caused such turmoil that the government of North Carolina felt that a direct attack on them was absolutely necessary. The Assembly resolved that the militia must destroy the Indian towns: "all the males therein to be killed, and the females captured for exchange; supplies captured to be

<sup>10</sup> Clarence Edwin Carter, comp. and ed., *Territorial Papers of the United States*, Gov. Blount to Sec'y of War, January 14, 1793, IV, 227.

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divided among the soldiers participating.”<sup>11</sup> The Governor also requested that the expenses be met with “continental credit” thus giving the campaign the official position of being the last of the American Revolution. Near the middle of September, Sevier, with about 250 men marched for the Chickamauga country. At Echota they picked up Indian guides. One of these was the Cherokee John Watts who spent much of his time with the upper Cherokees although he was a firm supporter of Dragging Canoe. Watts apparently was able to misguide the party by taking them to the original settlements east of Lookout Mountain, where some Indians still lived, and then on to the south instead of leading the party to the new lair in the Lower Towns.

Sevier camped for several days at Bull Town at the estuary of Chickamauga Creek. Upon leaving, he burned it, along with Settico, Vann’s, Chickamauga, and Tuskegee. When Tuskegee Town was leveled, Indian scouts, watching from across the river, shouted defiance from the cliffs of Lookout Mountain. Unable to withstand this challenge a body of the pioneers crossed the stream in attack. A brief and indecisive skirmish followed over the rough slopes of the mountain the afternoon of September 20, 1782, before the two forces withdrew.

This engagement, which has been called the last battle of the Revolution (it was fought after Yorktown), did not terminate the Indian trouble. The Upper Cherokees, who suffered most in the campaigns led by Sevier and whose hatred for the whites was not so intense, did sue for peace and generally remained on friendly terms with the border after 1782. But this was not true of the Chickamaugas, as their chiefs merely turned to new allies and the Spanish grafted on the stock which the British had planted. John McDonald continued to live with the Indians after the Revolution, and contacts were made with Henry Hamilton, British leader in the Old Northwest. These British agents attempted to keep the Indians aroused in spite of peace, but the supplies which could be got to the Chickamaugas over devious routes were very limited. Closer and surer sources of guns and amunitions were needed to carry on, and the new Spanish friends appeared very willing to furnish them.

<sup>11</sup> Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 199, quoting North Carolina State Records, XVI, 692.

### CHAPTER III

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#### *The Flaming Frontier*

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WHEN the Revolution ended, Spain was in full possession of Florida, whose northern boundary was in dispute, and the lands west of the Mississippi. But this vast unconquered area did not satisfy the agents of Spain; covetously they eyed the eastern portion of the valley of the Mississippi. As early as June, 1782, the Spanish Governor, Don Estevan Miro, had representatives of the Chickamaugas at Pensacola. Talks were held to encourage them to continue fighting, and promises of supplies were made, if the Indians would give no mercy to the Americans.

Both parties in this new coalition were particularly anxious to inflict defeat upon the settlements that had been made on the Cumberland River. Sprawled out along the river for some eighty-five miles, with cane and forest crowding the planters' fields, this area was the most difficult place on the frontier to defend. When Andrew Jackson journeyed over the newly opened Cumberland Road from Knoxville to his new home among the cabins, bark tents and "wagon camp" of Nashborough, a military guard furnished much needed protection along the way. As late as 1794 it cost fifty dollars to get a rider to carry a letter over this exposed road, and this sum, officials stated, was "dearly earned in many cases."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The Correspondence of General James Robertson," *The American Historical Magazine*, III, 372-373. Governor Blount wrote Robertson, and in closing advised the latter that the couriers who had carried the letter were "to be allowed the usual price, fifty dollars," for the service.

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The Chickamaugas and Creeks co-operated eagerly with the Spanish and continually harassed the Cumberland pioneers. From ambush amid the cane or corn fields of the isolated farms or in the forests along the high road to the settlement, they waited their opportunity to gain a scalp, or to capture some of the fine horses, for which the Cumberland settlements were already famous. Horse stealing was "the grand source of hostility" in that district, apparently overshadowing even the land hunger of the whites.<sup>2</sup>

The central government of the United States, having gone through the grueling years of the American Revolution, was eager to have peace with the southern Indians. Fear that the growing pressure of white settlements might precipitate new international conflict was increased by knowledge of the Spanish overtures. Consequently, efforts were made to gain the favor of John McDonald, and a definite policy of friendship and fairness was written into the Treaty of Hopewell, November 25, 1785. This treaty fixed a boundary between the territory open to the whites and the Indian country. It forbade the pioneers to settle on lands of the Cherokees and gave the Federal Government the exclusive right to regulate Indian trade. The four commissioners and thirty-seven chiefs who signed the treaty held this to be the final burial of the hatchet.<sup>3</sup>

In the meantime many new settlers appeared on the western side of the Appalachians to take up Revolutionary War land claims. North Carolina paid little attention to her western lands, and the pioneer settlers in northeastern Tennessee, assuming authority, established on December 17, 1784, the short-lived "State of Franklin." John Sevier was chosen governor. The people of this independent state were veteran Indian haters and typical frontier expansionists. Together with the new settlers they continued to press the Cherokees for lands in spite of the Treaty of Hopewell which promised the Indians that the frontier would actually be withdrawn slightly. Throngs of new settlers began to migrate to the Cumberland region. These violations brought the Chickamaugas fresh reason for renewing their attacks. Americans who passed overland were in constant peril from ambush

<sup>2</sup> *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, I, 265.

<sup>3</sup> Mooney, *op. cit.*, p. 61.



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while the parties which decided to use the dangerous Tennessee River route were frequently attacked as they floated through the Chickamauga country. Since North Carolina and the Federal Government could not agree on policy there was little hope of peace for the border, as the frontiersmen took their desire for additional lands into their own hands.

Among these who planned to use the river was a "Mr. Maybery, a gentleman from Baltimore,"<sup>4</sup> who constructed a boat on the upper Tennessee to carry merchandise to trade for furs in the Chickasaw country in 1785. His assistant was a young Scottish orphan who had just arrived in the United States from his home in Sutherlandshire. At Settico in the Chickamauga country they fell into the hands of the Indians who not only found inviting goods for plunder aboard the crude craft but also a hostile chief who was traveling with the party. Disagreement among the captors over the fate of the party called for arbitration by their white counselor, John McDonald. It is likely that the fresh Scottish brogue of the young Daniel Ross aided the trader-diplomat to decide that the whites should not only be spared, but that Ross should be invited to stay among the Chickamaugas and establish a trading post. Daniel Ross won the confidence of the natives and the hand of the daughter of his rescuer. During the next forty-five years he conducted a successful business among the Cherokees throughout their Nation and saw his son, John Ross, become the great leader of the tribe.

Dragging Canoe and his followers did not stop with raids on river parties and thrusts at the Cumberland settlements. With supplies coming in from the Spanish and with their own faithful John McDonald commissioned as a Spanish agent, the Indians sortied wherever pioneers were to be found. Direct defiance was hurled at the "State of Franklin" and the expansionist efforts of her leaders. The Indian agent of North Carolina summed up these raids for a period

<sup>4</sup> T. McKenney, *History of the Indian Tribes of North America*, II, 159-160. This is the way Maybery is described in the accounts of the incident. Actually, he was Francis Maybery of Hawkins County, Tennessee, who got his supplies in Baltimore and was therefore attributed to that community. (Information supplied by Mrs. Penelope J. Allen, Chattanooga, Tenn.)

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of time in a graphic picture: "Could a diagram be drawn, accurately designating every spot signalized by an Indian massacre, surprise, or depredation, or courageous attack, defense pursuit, or victory by the whites, or station, or fort or battlefield, or personal encounter, the whole of that section of the country would be studded with delineations of such incidents. Every spring, every ford, every path, every farm, every trail, every house nearly, in its first settlement, was once the scene of danger, exposure, attack, exploit, achievement, death."<sup>5</sup>

In August, 1786, Governor Sevier called the Franklin militia for a campaign against the Indians. As had frequently occurred, a treaty was forced on the more friendly tribesmen in the upper part of the Cherokee country by which they ceded the land between the French Broad and Little Tennessee Rivers. The Franklinites paid nothing for the cession. This severe measure, denounced by North Carolina officials, created many new recruits for the camp of Dragging Canoe. The Spanish agents, the British at Detroit, Shawnees, and Creeks plotted and schemed anew with the Chickamaugas in their council circles shaded by Lookout Mountain. As the power of Dragging Canoe mounted to its zenith in 1788-89, the young Shawnee, Tecumseh, with his brother lived among the Chickamaugas and participated in their councils and attacks. It is possible that this experience, which displayed the common problems of the American Indians, was a responsible factor in Tecumseh's later effort to form an Indian confederation.

Controversies which had arisen among the settlers, themselves, weakened the unity necessary to deal with the Indians. There was divided allegiance among them, as some wished to return to the jurisdiction of North Carolina, while others were determined to advance the cause of Franklin. The appointment of Joseph Martin as brigadier-general of the western counties of North Carolina was not received with favor by the adherents of Sevier. Martin was North Carolina's agent to the Cherokees and was thought to be too friendly with the Indians. He hesitated to conduct a campaign against the Chickamaugas, but the events on the frontier compelled him to or-

<sup>5</sup> Mooney, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

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ganize an expedition. In August, 1788, he left White's Fort—now Knoxville—with about five hundred men on a forced march in an effort to surprise the followers of Dragging Canoe. On arriving at the base of Lookout Mountain, a light horse detachment of volunteers was dispatched to seize the mountain pass and surprise Tuskegee Town, although the older Indian fighters disapproved of this strategy. About a hundred men slowly moved along the rock path which ran over the mountain's bench between the river bluffs and the escarpment at the top. From a well-selected ambush they were greeted by a burst of Indian fire. Confusion increased as the soldiers tried to turn their mounts and flee toward camp, "frightened out of their wits."

The next day another effort was made to gain the pass which led to the Chickamauga towns. The militia was again greeted by fire from the unseen Indians. Three were killed and others wounded in the engagement, which was continued by Martin's force only long enough to pick up the casualties and carry them away. Most of the party refused to fight, because of their fear of betrayal by the man under whom they rode. Martin had no choice but to withdraw. It was a great victory for Dragging Canoe. His followers had thrown back a formidable frontier militia. They had defeated the first force which had tried to rout them from their Lower Towns. Encouraged, the Chickamaugas made plans to start a major offensive. John Sevier at his home on Nolichucky River realized that this was exactly what Dragging Canoe would attempt, as a follow-up to the defeat of Martin. He immediately organized a series of counterblows to prevent the Indians from striking the border, and kept them from accomplishing any major results.

The question of the western lands of North Carolina was still a perplexing problem. In 1789, the Assembly of the state passed a second act ceding the area to the Federal Government. In accepting the western domain, which was organized as the Territory South of the River Ohio with William Blount as governor, the national Government assumed more directly the challenge of Spain, which still had plans to control the whole of the lower Mississippi Valley. Spanish schemes for such control had revolved around three ideas: the closing of the Mississippi to all traffic originating outside Spanish territory;



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union with the settlers west of the Alleghanies; and use of Indian warfare to accomplish the latter purpose.

President George Washington knew that the western lands could easily be lost; he felt that the new government was not strong enough to conduct a war against a combination of Spanish and Indian forces. A policy of conciliation with the Indians would have the effect of quieting the frontier and might therefore be the best type of offensive to use against the Spanish. General Henry Knox, Secretary of War, proposed one reason for the program in a letter to the President. "The disgraceful violation of the Treaty of Hopewell," he wrote, "with the Cherokee, requires the serious consideration of Congress. If so direct and manifest contempt of the authority of the United States be suffered with impunity, it will be in vain to attempt to extend the arm of Government to the frontiers. Indian tribes can have no faith in such imbecile promises, and the lawless whites will ridicule a government which shall, on paper only, make Indian treaties and regulate Indian boundaries."<sup>6</sup>

Governor Blount, aristocratic frontier diplomat, was advised by Secretary of War Knox that it was "the desire of the United States to treat the Indians with entire justice and humanity. . . ." Blount's position was a very difficult one. On the one hand, there was the wish of the Federal Government to make proper adjustment for previous Indian wrongs and to prevent future ones. To balance this, there was the insatiable appetite of the men on the frontier for new lands. To add to this perplexing adjustment, there was the necessity to convince the Indians that a new policy was sincerely in the making.

A treaty-making assembly, held at White's Fort beginning June 25, 1791, was eagerly attended by the Indians. The meeting was conducted with great ceremony, but the Indians found to their disappointment that the intention of the new government was not to return the lands, as they had hoped. The plan, instead, was to come to an agreement on boundaries which would include in white territory the settlements previously made, and to compensate the Indians for the land. There were fifteen other "material provisions" in the Treaty of Holston, which was signed July 2, among them being one in which

<sup>6</sup> *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, I, 53.



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the Cherokees promised the whites free navigation of the Tennessee River.<sup>7</sup>

Although chiefs from the Chickamauga towns were present at the writing of the treaty, they would have nothing to do with its terms. Dragging Canoe refused to guarantee safe travel on the river. Constantly, he remained in contact with the Spanish and the British at Detroit. The victory of the Indians of the Northwest over a United States force under General Arthur St. Clair renewed the determination of the southern tribes to fight on. In the towns nestled below Lookout Mountain, schemes for an Indian federation to join in a grand war against the whites were vigorously planned. Dragging Canoe visited the great Creek chief, Alexander McGillivray, and told him that the time was ripe to promote an Indian federation, which would drive the Americans out.<sup>8</sup>

Minor raids against the border continued, but on March 1, 1792, the grand strategic plan received a setback from which it never recovered. On that day, the consistent hater of the whites and great Indian leader, Dragging Canoe, died a natural death. With his pipe and tobacco, gun and bow, he was buried at Running Water Town, which he had founded. From it, he had waged relentless war, rather than to sell or to barter away the lands of his people.

A council was immediately called at Running Water to select a new war chief. A half-breed, John Watts, was chosen for the post. Watts was not present at the council, but was sent for at once. It was thought by Gov. Blount that his selection would "soften if not altogether alter" the attitude of the Indians.<sup>9</sup> This optimism was not confirmed by events. Urged on by the Spanish, whose representative, William Panton, of Panton, Leslie and Company, had been visiting the Cherokee country, and savage, revengeful Indians like Doublehead and the Bench, Watts continued to war on the whites, using every kind of deception and duplicity that his fertile mind could concoct. The new leader removed the center of Chickamauga activity from

<sup>7</sup> Carter, comp. and ed., *op. cit.*, IV, 60-68.

<sup>8</sup> Brown: *op. cit.*, p. 328; *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, I, 264.

<sup>9</sup> Carter, comp. and ed., *op. cit.*, IV, 129-130; 132-136. Gov. Blount to Secretary of War, March 20, 1792. Gov. Blount to James Robertson, Apr. 1, 1792.

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Running Water Town to Willstown. It was one of the newer towns, which by then had grown to a total of twelve from the original five.<sup>10</sup>

Watts was considered an "honorable enemy" by the frontiersmen. Efforts were made by the Federal authorities to persuade him to follow a path of peace. Governor Blount and he met in the spring of 1793 for two days, a session which was described by Blount in a communication to Secretary of War Knox. He wrote:

By the minutes it does not appear that I was more than one day with Watts. The fact is I was two, but spoke only on the sixth [of April] about public business, the other was devoted to eating, drinking and jocular conversation, of which Watts is very fond. The expenses of this conference amount to 100  $\frac{1}{3}$  dollars owing principally to the quantity and price of the whiskey—of which I considered it the interest of the United States to be as liberal as Watts and his party were thirsty. He appeared truly friendly, and with his usual cleverness, and is unquestionably the most leading character of his nation, and tho' he would make no promises, even to use his endeavours, to carry a full representation of his nation to Philadelphia, yet I have not doubt but he will. . . .<sup>11</sup>

In the meantime, incidents were occurring which incensed the frontier. Houses were burned, parties of travelers were attacked, and scalps taken in several localities. Those in the settlements worked closely by the stockades in which they could seek refuge. Despite all these, the Federal Government insisted upon no more than defensive measures. Secretary Knox wrote Governor Blount, May 17, 1793:

It is indeed a serious question to plunge the nation into a war with the southern tribes of Indians, supported as it is said they would be. But if that war actually exists, if depredations are repeated and continued upon the frontier inhabitants, the measure of protection is indispensable, but that protection can only be of the defensive sort. If other, or more extensive measures shall be necessary, they must probably result from the authority expressly given for that purpose by Congress.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Willstown was not on the river. It was located near the present Fort Payne, Alabama.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 249-251.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 256-258.

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Efforts to persuade the Indians to peace were continued. The meeting at Philadelphia, to which Governor Blount referred in his letter, was a part of this program. It was not the first time President Washington had extended an invitation to the Indians to visit the nation's capital, as Bloody Fellow had led a group of chiefs on such a trip in 1792. Early in June, 1793, representatives of the nation gathered at the home of another important chief, Hanging Maw, in preparation for the long overland journey. Unfortunately, one of the frequent attacks upon a border settlement by a small band of warriors occurred about the same time. A retaliatory effort by some frontier militiamen fell upon the group of Cherokee leaders who had peacefully assembled for the trip to Philadelphia. Scantee, Fool Charlie, and other Indians were killed, and Hanging Maw was among the wounded. The two incidents rekindled the frontier. Although urged still to abandon the warpath by the Federal authorities, Watts as a principal spokesman for the Indians turned away in the style of his predecessor, Dragging Canoe. Peace seemed impossible unless the desire for land by the frontiersmen was curbed. When Watts was asked earlier in the year, to get his followers "to open their ears" to peace, he was quoted as having said "that the white people had stopped theirs with land, and requested the white people to open their own ears, and move off the land."<sup>13</sup>

The aggressive Doublehead was more violent in his reaction to events. Further, he saw an opportunity to assert his leadership over the more warlike members of the tribe. He demanded satisfaction for the attack on Hanging Maw's home from the Federal Government. "This is the third time," he wrote bitterly, "we have been served so when we were talking peace, that they fell on us and killed us."<sup>14</sup>

In upper Tennessee, John Sevier was still active in military affairs. In the fall of 1793, he was able to lead an expedition against the southern Indians in what proved to be his last campaign. Although general policy limited measures to defensive action, Sevier had in his pocket specific instructions from Daniel Smith, acting governor of

<sup>13</sup> *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, I, 436-445.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 460. See also letter of Secretary of War to Hanging Maw, Aug. 27, 1793, *ibid.*, I, 431, expressing "his highest indignation" at what had occurred.



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the territory in the absence of Governor Blount, which read, "The country is to be defended in the best manner we can, comporting with my general instruction to you of the 17th."<sup>15</sup> As it was difficult for a border leader who had to be guided largely by his own initiative and decisions to follow orders of this type, it was only logical that Sevier forgot to stop at the border line. A large number of towns were destroyed as his band moved as far south as the Coosa River, but again he failed to march against the main sources of the trouble in the Lower Towns. The Federal Government was so disturbed by this offensive campaign, which went far past what could be called defensive action, that the Secretary of War refused to endorse any measure to compensate the troops for their efforts.<sup>16</sup> Frontier and governmental policy continued to disagree.

Events on the far shores of the Atlantic Ocean, however, proved more important in the Indian warfare than Sevier's campaign or the War Department's defensive stand. France had generated such trouble for Spain by this time that the latter no longer saw herself able to supply the American Indians with tools of war. By 1794, the Spanish informed the Cherokees and advised them to make peace with the United States. Thus international intrigue vanished from the towns below Lookout Mountain as the European situation boiled over into war.

The general conditions of the period had thus developed in such a fashion as to encourage fresh talks by the Indians with the Federal Government. In June, 1794, the opportunist, Doublehead, arrived in the nation's capital with a party of minor chieftains. These had been carefully chosen by him from the group of Chickamaugas who were least friendly to the whites. This delegation was warmly welcomed by members of the Government, even though they did not represent Chief Watts and the more amenable Cherokees. President Washington sent them a letter in which he restated the Federal policy: ". . . we mean now to bury deep and forever, the red hatchet of war.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 622.

<sup>16</sup> Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 395n. In 1797, Congress at the instigation of Andrew Jackson agreed to pay the men on the basis that their territory had been invaded and the campaign consequently a defensive one.



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Let us therefore forget the past events, let us endeavor to find means by which the path between us may be kept open and secure from all harm."<sup>17</sup>

Another contributing factor to the growing interest in peace among the Chickamaugas was the realization that help from the northern Indians and their British agents had vanished as rapidly as had Spanish aid. Under the strong measures of Mad Anthony Wayne, the tribesmen of the Old Northwest were defeated in the battle of Fallen Timbers. All events were pointing toward the closing days of warfare and a new era for the Cherokee Nation. Nevertheless, spasmodic raids on the frontier continued.

The first time the frontiersmen had an opportunity to make an official concerted statement on the Indian troubles was when the General Assembly of the Territory South of the River Ohio met for its first session on August 25, 1794. They assembled in Knoxville, which had just been named for Henry Knox, the conciliatory Secretary of War. The members of the Assembly made vigorous protest to the Federal Government about its policy of defensive action only. From their experience, they pointed out, they knew that annuities and treaties would not end Indian depredation. "Fear, not love," they stated in a memorial sent to the Congress, "is the only means by which Indians can be governed."<sup>18</sup>

Nor was James Robertson, the leader of the Cumberland settlements, satisfied with the ameliorating policy of the Federal Government. "When will the Lower Towns get their deserts?" he asked. He had been requesting action against the Chickamaugas for some time, but could not move Governor Blount from his defensive stand. Finally, Robertson decided to take matters into his own hands. Assistance from Kentucky was received, and Major James Ore, who had just arrived at Nashville with forty militiamen from East Tennessee to protect the Cumberland settlements, offered his co-operation. The 550 men who assembled were put under the command of Ore, and

<sup>17</sup> William Smith, *Story of the Cherokees*, pp. 102-104. Smith says that Washington increased the Cherokee's annual allotment from \$1,500,000 to \$5,000,000. This is in error. The allotment was raised but from \$1,500 to \$5,000. See *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, I, 543.

<sup>18</sup> Carter, comp. and ed., *op. cit.*, IV, 354-55 n.

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Joseph Brown, who had lived with the Chickamaugas as a prisoner some years before, was secured to lead the expedition to the Lower Towns. Governor Blount's disapproval of this unauthorized expedition was expected and received, but only after the men had started down the war trail across Cumberland Mountain. On September 12, 1794, about dark, the Tennessee River was reached at a point three miles below the mouth of the Sequatchie. During that dark night, 268 men crossed the river made high by fall rains. Two clumsy oxhide boats plied back and forth carrying arms and munition; axmen built a raft which carried "guns, shot bags, and clothes as snugly as a canoe could have done." It was towed across by the better swimmers, who pulled with attached ropes which they held in their mouths, or pushed amid the nonswimmers who clung to the raft. One of the latter, Major F. Porter, "could not swim one rod, so he got together a bunch of cane, and holding onto it kicked himself across."<sup>19</sup>

The next morning those who had crossed pushed on to Nickajack about five miles upstream, while a part of those who remained on the north bank of the river took stand on that shore opposite the town to prevent the escape of the Indians. Encircling the village under cover of the corn that grew close to the cabins, the attackers turned the engagement into a massacre. After destroying the town and sending the captured women and children downstream, Major Ore and his men immediately set out for Running Water about three miles distant. Its inhabitants had heard the shooting at Nickajack and its warriors were on the trail to bring assistance when they met the buckskin-clad frontier army. A short resistance was followed by the Indians' flight to the hills. Running Water was a deserted village when the party arrived to destroy it.

After the burning of Running Water, the whites recrossed the Tennessee and joined their comrades for the return march to Nashville, which they reached in a satisfied mood. Not only had they conducted the first successful campaign against the Chickamaugas but they had also learned of two other important developments. On the body of Chief Breath, killed at Nickajack, the letter from Spanish authorities, dated July 14, 1794, was discovered, informing the Indians

<sup>19</sup> Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 424.

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of the troubles in Spain and advising them to make peace with the Americans. On the trail home they heard of Wayne's triumph over the northern Indians at Fallen Timbers. Their own campaign, although overshadowed by this victory, at least would be considered the southern sequel to it. Locally, the result meant that the gun need no longer be carried to the fields on the Cumberland; peace could now be anticipated.

Governor Blount and the War Department displayed at once their disapproval of this raid. The Secretary of War stated: "The destruction of the Lower Cherokee towns stands upon its own footing; that it was unauthorized is certain. . . ." He consequently ruled that the soldiers who participated in the Nickajack campaign should receive no compensation for it. Blount repeatedly expressed his mortification over the breach of established policy, and asked Robertson to send an explanation of the orders given Major Ore. The result of the confused situation which developed was the resignation of Robertson as a brigadier-general on October 23, 1794. Reluctance to release the doughty frontier warrior, however, caused a delay in its acceptance until the following August.<sup>20</sup>

John Watts and his Chickamaugas had reached the point where the pipe of peace had to be smoked. The raid of Major Ore, the loss of Spanish support, and the defeat of northern confederates could be added in no other way. Doublehead stated the Indian position bluntly: ". . . we all want to live now in peace with you all."<sup>21</sup> At the Tellico Blockhouse in November, 1794, they accepted the talks of the white men. Although a few Creek marauding parties were joined by individual groups of Chickamaugas, days on the war path were generally ended. The period of the great division within the Cherokee Nation was over.

This, however, did not mean that the pioneering frontiersmen ceased their encroachments upon the lands of the Indians. From the building of Fort Loudoun the Cherokee country had been the scene

<sup>20</sup> *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, I, 634; "The Correspondence of General James Robertson," *The American Historical Magazine*, III, 359-363; T. E. Matthews, *General James Robertson, Father of Tennessee*, pp. 398-415.

<sup>21</sup> *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, I, 532. Doublehead to Gov. Blount, Oct. 20, 1794.

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of contention, composed of a web of individual, regional and international ambitions. Through the years the settlers assumed an initiative which in the nineteenth century was labeled "manifest destiny." On a larger scale the imperialistic ambitions of European empire builders forced Indians and frontiersmen alike to become pawns in a struggle beyond their understanding. Purposes and methods must be weighed in the scales of the era; however, the end was that the expedient efforts of the settlers dominated over the strategy of European statesmen as well as over the conciliatory desire of the Government of the United States in the Administration of George Washington.



## CHAPTER IV

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### *High Road to Civilization*

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THE western phase of the War of 1812 found the temptation to reach for the tomahawk still alive among some of the Cherokees. From the Creeks came priests with a new revelation which was passed around in an attempt to get the whole Indian population behind Tecumseh in his war on the United States. A great medicine dance was staged at Ustanali,<sup>1</sup> the Cherokee capital at the time, where the doctrine of a return to the old life was enthusiastically proposed. A Cherokee "prophet" proclaimed that the road, which had been given to their fathers at the beginning of the world, had been broken by the tribe. They had taken up the white man's clothing, trinkets, beds, mills—yes, even his books and cats. All this was evil and the gods in their wrath were causing the game to leave the country. Destruction was in store for all if they did not take off the trappings of the settlers and become Indians again.

Such talk was powerful in its appeal. Only one, Ganun-da-le-gi, known later as Major Ridge, a principal chief, opposed the speech as being a source of war with the United States, which had more power to destroy the Indians than had the gods of the prophet. However, the masses were so enthusiastic for the revelation that the objector narrowly escaped with his life. The "prophet" threatened to invoke a terrible storm which would purge the Nation of all non-believers. Those who accepted the idea were urged to gather for

<sup>1</sup> Near the present town of Calhoun, Georgia.

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safety on one of the high peaks of the Great Smokies. In full faith many of the Cherokees made the trek into the mountains where they lingered at the appointed place for the appointed day, having abandoned all material evidences of the white man's civilization. As the day came and went, another Utopian chimera, of which the world has been full, was dissipated and the disillusioned returned to their homes. The great revival was over. The influence of some of the important chiefs was exerted to bring the Nation into full alignment with the United States, and for the first time the Cherokees unitedly decided to march with the white settlers. Under the flag of the Border Captain, Andrew Jackson, they fought the Creeks, sharing in the decisive victory of Horseshoe Bend, and thus apparently established themselves in the good graces of the Federal Government.

From the time of the first traders who pressed across the mountains, the Cherokees purchased trinkets, clothing, knives, as well as guns and powder. Horses and cattle and other domestic animals were used widely throughout the Nation. The feeling that these material evidences of the white man's civilization were indispensable was held by at least some of the chiefs as the reason for negotiating with agents of governments that were hostile to the United States. In the Colonial period, Charleston, Augusta and Savannah merchants vied vigorously for the trade which brought furs and deerskins to their warehouses. In the troublous twenty years following the outbreak of the American Revolution, British and Spanish agents were generally associated with mercantile houses, and their commercial connections were of valuable assistance in their political activities. As the frontier quieted down after the wars with the Chickamaugas, efforts were made by merchants in the South Carolina and Georgia communities to renew their trade with the Indians. Furthermore, there were new opportunities for business with citizens in the growing settlements around Knoxville and Nashville.

However, the Cherokee Nation, which in many ways occupied the position of a foreign country within the United States, stood as a barrier between the trading areas of the coastal regions and the interior. Only the Federal Government could treat with the Indians. Its agents, consequently, were instructed to negotiate a treaty for

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the construction of a road, over which safe passage was to be guaranteed the whites. Colonel Return Jonathan Meigs, in whose hands this important matter was placed, had been appointed agent to the Cherokees by the Federal Government in 1801. He had been an officer in the Revolutionary army and was sixty-one years of age when he accepted the arduous duties on the frontier. By his sincerity and forthrightness he quickly won the respect and friendship of the Indians, who gave to him the name, the White Path, as a symbol of their feeling.

In 1803, there was "not a single perch of wagon road" in the whole Cherokee country.<sup>2</sup> In that year the first of a series of meetings was held, the result of which was the Treaty of October 25, 1805, by which the Cherokee agreed to the request of the Government to have roads opened for communication between the states of Tennessee and Georgia. This consent was not secured without opposition, which was attributable less to a lack of progressive spirit than suspicion of what the roads might cause. According to one story, a chief built a wagon shortly before this time. It was the first wagon constructed in the Nation, but the council, before whom the owner was brought, severely criticized him and forbade its use. In its opinion, the council stated, "If you have wagons, you must have roads—and if wagon roads, then the whites will be among us."<sup>3</sup>

These roads, the last of which was completed in 1807, followed the same route from Augusta, Georgia, to near Spring Place, in the heart of the Cherokee Nation, where they divided. One section led north to the Little Tennessee River near Tellico Blockhouse in East Tennessee. The other went northwestward, ending at the headwaters of Stone's river, where it connected with the road to Nashville. Though the agreement for their construction was made by the Cherokees and Federal Government, the latter reported to the states of Tennessee and Georgia that money was not available to build them. The states, if they wished the roads, had to provide the funds. The legislatures promptly voted money for their construction. For the upkeep of

<sup>2</sup> Allen Collection, *R. J. Meigs to Sec. of War William Eustis*, December 1, 1803.

<sup>3</sup> Mitchell, F. L., *Georgia, Land and People*, p. 158.

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them, a turnpike company was organized by the Cherokees, which allotted the sections for which the members were to be responsible, and established a schedule of tolls and ferry charges.<sup>4</sup>

General James Robertson and others of the Middle Tennessee communities had been active in promoting the construction of the section of the road to Stone's River. They had been assisted by the Cherokees who lived along the Tennessee. At a council held at Lookout Mountain Town, November 25, 1806, eight of these, including The Glass, Turtle-at-home, Parch Flower, and John Lowery, wrote to Colonel Meigs, protesting against the opposition of some of their eastern brethren as well as the efforts of a few whites to usurp ferrying privileges.

The road started at Fort Nash on the headwaters of Stone's River. From there it crossed the Cumberland Plateau near Monteagle and then down Battle Creek to Turtle-at-home's ferry on the Tennessee, where it crossed to Nickajack. From that point two roads were built. One followed the Nickajack Trail to Lookout Mountain Town (near the site of the present Trenton, Georgia) and crossed Lookout Mountain there. The other branch led directly through the present Chattanooga. Beginning at Nickajack it went through Running Water Town to the tavern of John Brown near Lookout Mountain, where it met the trail from the North, which crossed the river at the ferry operated by Brown, a half-breed Cherokee. From there the road wound around the north of Lookout Mountain to the spot on Chattanooga Creek where Daniel Ross had a store and kept a stand for travelers. Then it passed through Ross's Gap in the present Missionary Ridge. The two branches came together somewhere north of the present Dalton, Georgia, and proceeded as a single road to the neighborhood of Vann's at Spring Place.

Along the roads, wagons passed from Charleston, Augusta and

<sup>4</sup> *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, I, 697-698; State of Georgia: *Executive Minutes*, 1802-1805, p. 434; 1805-1806, pp. 111, 113; State of Georgia: *Governor's Letter Books*, 1802-09, pp. 83-84; Allen collection; J. N. Goff, "Retracing The Old Federal Road," in *The Emory University Quarterly*, VI, 159-171. These roads are very confusedly named, each being called the Federal Road or the Georgia Road, depending upon the source.



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Savannah, carrying their merchandise to the Indians and the whites beyond. Great herds of beef cattle, swine and horses passed down the road on their way to the settled areas nearer the seacoast, accompanied by the colorful drovers singing their songs of the trail as they guided their product to market under its own power. In the reminiscences of one who knew the road there is a vivid picture of its interesting traffic:

Enterprising men soon established stands on the road and built good frame houses and clusters of log houses, also stables and stake-and-rider fence lots. They made provision for the traveling public. At first most of the traveling was on horseback. A strong horse, with a good, roomy saddle, stirrups the right length, and going in a fox trot, will easily carry a rider forty miles a day. Sometimes half a dozen or more people met at one of these stands. They found plenty of good things to eat, and around a wide fireplace good cheer prevailed.

The next things that came were droves of fine beef cattle from Kentucky and Tennessee; droves of horses and mules, sleek and fat, a hundred in a drove; then the hog droves, from five hundred to two thousand in a drove. The manager went forward a day or two ahead to engage corn and lots for his hogs. Often there was a purveyor, who came early in the afternoon to stop at the place where they were to spend the night. He commenced cooking for the hands that drove the hogs, and also prepared an early breakfast in the morning. Usually the cooking was done in a little house built for their use. The hallooing of the drivers could be heard from morning till night.

One other member of the traveling public was a large wagon drawn by four oxen. It was loaded with flour and whiskey.<sup>5</sup>

At places like John Brown's tavern drovers would find surcease from the vigilance of their occupation in rather riotous pleasure. This may have been responsible for Brown's having built his dwelling on one side of the river and his tavern on the other. There are occasional legends about unpleasant happenings at the tavern. The story goes that one reason for the fine entertainment offered the drovers was to invite their return with bulging wallets, after their visit to the markets. There are unexplained accounts of bodies mysteriously dis-

<sup>5</sup> W. J. Cotter, *My Autobiography*, pp. 73-74.

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covered nearby in the river, while others tell of skeletons found over a convenient cliff. Pocketbooks were never found with the bodies.

The Cherokees who had settled along the road were rapidly turning to the more peaceful pursuits of farming and crafts. The Indian cabins were surrounded by peach and apple orchards. Gardens and fields produced corn, beans, wheat, and tobacco. Cotton was raised to keep spinning wheels and looms busy, while the surplus was occasionally sent to market. Beeswax, hides, furs, and livestock were also sold, furnishing currency with which to buy the goods brought into the back country. The native arts of pottery and basketmaking were followed by the women, while the men supplemented agricultural incomes by tanning skins obtained in the hunt.

The Federal Government's policy of peace with the Indians, which had had an ameliorating effect on the main body of the Cherokees, while the Chickamaugas were still hostile, was continued and broadened. As part of this peaceful attitude, which was so hard for the border to understand, the Government gratuitously furnished farm tools and other assistances to the Indians. This policy along with a very rapid recovery from the ravages of war brought a general air of development to the nation. In 1801, Colonel Benjamin Hawkins reported: "In the Cherokee agency, the wheel, the loom, and the plough is in pretty general use, farming, manufacture, and stock raising the topic of conversation among the men and women."<sup>6</sup>

The adoption of commercial and agricultural arts was, of course, not uniform throughout the Indian country. The Cherokees in the western and southwestern part of the area settled down to the new life easily. This was particularly true of those who lived along the roads and near the stores. The groups who lived farther from the settlements, particularly those who were in the mountain areas, were more backward. They complained that they were not receiving their full share of the tools, which were distributed by the Government as a part of the annual annuity, granted in payment for the land cessions. But they were told by leaders of the more progressive element that "these things have been offered to all alike at the same time, but while the

<sup>6</sup> Mooney, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

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lowland people have been quick to accept, the mountaineers have hung back."<sup>7</sup>

Certain individuals and family groups within the tribe made more headway than others. Early in the eighteenth century English-speaking traders began to locate among the Cherokees. As trade grew, their

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 82-83.

Allen Collection, Letter from Col. R. J. Meigs to Secretary of War William H. Crawford, November 4, 1816. This letter illustrates the rapid advances the Cherokees were making. "Sir, When I came first into this agency a single blacksmith only was employed; his pay and rations amounted to \$376 per annum, beside the pay of a striker at the anvil, for which I paid \$8 to \$10 dollars per month. As the nation advances in agriculture it was found that a single blacksmith placed in any part of the great extent of Indian settlements was only a partial advantage; many had to come 100 miles for smith work, to remedy this the present mode was adopted, that is of permitting blacksmiths to come into the nation who should have no dependance on the Government, except by compliance with my orders in favor of Indians for smith work, at the same price paid in the white settlements.

"There is now 15 blacksmiths within the agency, 5 of which are Cherokees, self-taught. They are so dispersed in the nation as to render great service to the natives. Many of the Indians pay for their own smith-work—the white blacksmiths are allowed to till as much land as they please for raising corn & to keep stock.

"It appears to me, sir, that there cannot be a better plan adopted at present in this agency than the one used. The spinning wheels are provided in the same way—there are two white men & two real Cherokees who make spinning wheels—they comply with my orders, and work for others on their account. The looms for weaving are nearly all made by Indians for which the price is eight dollars only, a piece.

"It is my opinion that if mechanics should be employed in the pay of the Government—a tin-plate worker only excepted, that the Indians would place too much dependance on that source—which would lessen their own enterprise in mechanical arts & retard their improvement.

"The present mode of furnishing them with blacksmith work is less expensive than any other, so it appears to me. Necessity or interest had induced them to some exertions—many of them now tan their own leather—they make shoes, and there is one good saddler a Cherokee. They have, too, many silversmiths. They make the rich hat-bands, arm-bands & other ornaments of dress, & silver spurs equal to any I ever saw. If a tin-plate worker could be employed for one or two years it would be of much use, who should be agreed with to instruct young Cherokees in the art of his profession—the Cherokees now pay a great deal of money for tin ware, it being useful in every family. I estimate the expense of a good workman in that business at \$365 pr year he finding his own tools, the tin-plate to be provided by the government—and the whole of this expense may be saved by retrenching the expense gradually from the present expense of other presents."



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number increased. A large proportion were Scottish in origin. Some of them took Indian wives and according to Cherokee custom became full members of the tribe. They were unlike the "squaw men" of the West, as they were usually of good stock and established themselves as responsible merchants. They brought knowledge of the institutions and civilization of the white men to the Indians, and by the nineteenth century, they and their descendants had become one of the dominant influences of the Nation. They were elevated to positions of leadership by the aborigines, and though their way of life reflected to degree the environmental influence of their surroundings they had far more effect upon the Indians than the latter did upon them. Repeatedly in the Cherokee annals, there appear Indians with such English, Irish, and Scottish names as: Shorey, Coody, Adair, McNair, Starr, Vann, Brown, Taylor, Martin, McDonald, Ross, Lowry, Gunter, Galpin, Lynch, and Dougherty.

This position of importance is well exemplified by John McDonald, whose influence upon the Chickamaugas has already been shown. As the border quieted down, McDonald became more and more a factor in the molding of a stable society among the Cherokees. Governor William Blount of the Territory South of the River Ohio wrote of McDonald in 1794: "He has much more influence among the lower Cherokees than any other man who resides among them."<sup>8</sup>

Such men and their mixed-blood descendants, if they could afford it, sent their children away to be educated, or built schoolhouses on their grounds and employed teachers. They became slaveholders. The first slaves in the nation were runaway Negroes whom the Indians put to work cultivating their fields. Some were secured by capture and others by purchase. By 1825, the number of slaves owned by Cherokees totaled 1,277.<sup>9</sup>

In the fall of 1816 Cherokee and Creek chiefs met at a great council at Turkeytown, near the present Center, Alabama, to settle boundary problems and to ratify a recent treaty. After these deliberations, General Andrew Jackson, who was present, introduced a stranger

<sup>8</sup> Carter, comp. and ed., *op. cit.*, IV, 361-364. Letter from Governor Blount to Secretary of War Knox, Nov. 7, 1794.

<sup>9</sup> Mooney, *op. cit.*, p. 112.



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to the gathering. He was Cyrus Kingsbury and represented the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. He was filled with inspiration for a projected mission and school in the Nation which he requested the Cherokees to consider. On his way south Kingsbury had stopped in Washington to discuss the project. It met with President Madison's approval and promises of government aid in supplying buildings and equipment were obtained.<sup>10</sup>

Several denominations carried on missionary work among the Cherokees and itinerant ministers were dispatched to carry the Gospel to them. Four of these—the Moravians, the Presbyterians, the Congregationalists, and the Methodists—considered locating or did locate in the Lookout Mountain area. The first of these was the Moravians, who established a mission in 1801 at Spring Place, near the home of the progressive mixed blood, James Vann. They had considered a site near the home of John McDonald on Chickamauga Creek, but chose the higher area because it appeared healthier. Under the guidance of the Reverend and Mrs. John Gambold, who enthusiastically took charge of the work in 1805, the mission exercised a great influence among the Indians. It was closed January 1, 1833, when its lands were forfeited under the Georgia laws.<sup>11</sup>

Gideon Blackburn, leader of the Presbyterian work, moved onto the East Tennessee frontier in 1792, a young man of twenty, armed with Bible and rifle. He was ready to use either in the effort to win the frontier and the Indians to civilization. He settled at Fort Craig, the site of the present Maryville, and soon became the pastor of two churches. Between sermons, he joined in the usual occupations of the pioneer: felling trees, planting crops, and participating in campaigns against the Indians. His sensitive understanding of the tragic circumstances of the Indians caused him to turn from war upon them to an effort to help them. As early as 1799, he suggested that the Presbyterians undertake missionary work among the Cherokees. The idea was accepted in 1803 and money appropriated for the purpose.

<sup>10</sup> Joseph Tracy, *History of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*, 63-64; R. S. Walker, *Torchlight to the Cherokees*, 17-24.

<sup>11</sup> Edmund Schwarze, *History of the Moravian Mission Among Southern Indian Tribes of the United States*, 56-83; Walker, *op. cit.*, 25-40.

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With his commission as the first missionary from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church,<sup>12</sup> Blackburn went to Washington, where he secured approval of his project from President Jefferson.

He opened a school on the Hiwassee River in the spring of 1804. Here the work was so successful that he put on a demonstration before Colonel Meigs, General Smith, Governor Sevier, and an assembly of Indians and whites, who had gathered for treaty-making talks on July 4, 1805. In a letter, written November 10, 1807, Blackburn described this event:

There I attended with my school. Our passage to the place was indeed romantic. Figure to yourself 25 little savages of the forest, all seated in a large canoe, the teacher at one end, and myself at the other, steering our course down the stream, a distance by water of nearly 20 miles. To see the little creatures sitting neatly dressed in homespun cotton, presented them by the females of my white congregation, their hearts beating with the anticipation of their expected examination, frequently reviewing their lessons in order to be ready; then joining in anthems of praise to the Redeemer, making the adjoining hills and groves resound with the adored name of Jesus—what heart could have remained unmoved!

On the 4th of July we arrived at the place of treaty . . . the school was introduced, marching in procession between the open-ranks of white and red spectators. Each scholar read such a portion, as was requested. The different classes then spelled a number of words without the book. Specimens of their writing and ciphering were shown, and the exhibition closed by the children singing, with a clear and distinct voice, a hymn or two, committed to memory. The scene was very impressive. Few of the spectators were unmoved, and many shed tears plentifully. The Governor, a hardy man who had often braved the dangers of war in the same forest, said to me. "I have often stood unmoved amidst showers of bullets from the Indian rifles; but this effectually unmans me. I see civilization taking the ground of barbarism, and the praises of Jesus succeeding to the war-whoop of the savage." All this time the tears were stealing down his manly cheeks.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> V. M. Queener, "Gideon Blackburn." *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, No. 6, 1934. pp. 12-28. The material on Blackburn is largely taken from this article.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

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The success of the first school attracted attention to Blackburn, whose assistance was solicited by Daniel Ross to establish a school at his home, primarily for his own children. Another was started by Blackburn at Sale Creek on August 26, 1805. The arduous labors connected with these and other activities caused Blackburn's health to fail. He made trips north and south to raise funds for the missions, but increasing ill health caused him to give up the work in 1810.

In the year that Blackburn discontinued his activities among the Cherokees, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was organized by the Congregationalist Church. In 1812, this denomination was joined by the Presbyterians in the Board. Growing criticism of its concentration of work in foreign lands, when so many opportunities existed among the Indians at home, caused the Board to send Kingsbury to the Nation. The Council at Turkeytown agreed to support the project and appointed the Glass to go with Kingsbury to select a location for the new mission. He found what he considered an ideal site near Lookout Mountain. It was, he wrote in a letter to the Board, November 25, 1816, "a plantation which had been occupied several years by an old Scotch gentleman, who had married into the Nation. As he wished to remove to another place, he offered me his buildings and improvements, which included about twenty-five acres of cleared land, for five hundred dollars. There are all the necessary buildings to commence, except a school house, and perhaps, a dwelling house."<sup>14</sup>

This property was the original home on Chickamauga Creek of John McDonald, which had been considered and rejected by the Moravians. The Federal Government furnished the money for the land and buildings and promised to supply the mission with plows, hoes, axes, spinning wheels, looms, cards, and other implements. Early in 1817, the mission started work. At first, it bore the traditional name of the area, Chickamauga, but in May, 1818, it was changed to Brainerd, in memory of David Brainerd, a distinguished pioneer missionary worker among the northern tribes, to avoid confusion with the nearby Indian village. In the twenty-one years between 1817 and the closing of the mission, when the Cherokees were moved

<sup>14</sup> Walker, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-24.

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west in 1838, numerous devoted ministers, teachers, farmers, and artisans—men and women—came from New England and other areas to bring the Gospel and industrious habits of living to the Indians.<sup>15</sup>

Only a positive goal and deepest convictions brought these pious people from their settled lives to the raw southern border. It was, Kingsbury said, "the grand object of the present undertaking to impart to [the Cherokees] that knowledge which is calculated to make them useful citizens, and pious Christians. In order to do this, it appeared necessary to instruct them in the various branches of common English education, to form them to habits of industry, and to give them a confident knowledge of the economy of civilized life."<sup>16</sup> By 1820, about eighty Indian boys and girls were living at the mission. In the mission church, whites, reds, and blacks gathered, often after journeys across the mountains, to listen to the words of the resident ministers or their frequent visitors.

There were several distinguished guests who stopped at the mission and whose visits are recorded in its daily journal. In May, 1818, Governor Joseph McMinn of Tennessee paid a call. He was in the neighborhood because of the important matter of establishing the boundary line between Georgia and Tennessee, which passed through the Cherokee Nation.

A year later, another group of guests arrived to the confusion of the residents. It was the party of President James Monroe, who was then engaged upon a tour of the Southeast. The apologetic entry in the journal for May 27, 1819, reads:

The President accompanied by General Gaines and lady, stopped to visit the school. We had expected the President would call, as he passed, but supposed that we should hear of his approach in time to make a little preparation and to meet and escort him in; but so silent was his approach,

<sup>15</sup> The majority traveled on the Federal or Georgia road, as advised by Kingsbury in his letter of November 25, 1816: first, "by water to Savannah, Georgia, thence to Augusta in a boat. . . . At Augusta they may purchase horses or come with wagons, which are frequently passing through the nation. They will take the main road from Georgia to West Tennessee and proceed on to Mr. John Ross' near Lookout Mountain, on the Tennessee River." *Ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.



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that we had no information that he had left Georgia, till he was announced as at the door. In thus taking us by surprise, he had an opportunity of seeing us in our every day dress, and observing how the concerns of the family and school were managed, when we were alone; and perhaps it was best on the whole, that he should have this view of us. If we had endeavored to appear a little better than usual, we might only have made it worse.

He looked at the buildings and farms, visited the school, and asked questions in the most unaffected and familiar manner; and was pleased to express his approbation of the plan of instruction, particularly as the children were taken into the family, taught to work, etc. He thought this the best, and perhaps the only way to civilize and christianize the Indians; and assured us he was well pleased with the conduct and improvement of the children.

We had just put up, and were about finishing, a log cabin for the use of the girls. He said that such buildings were not good enough, and advised that we put up another kind of building in place of this;—that we make it a good two story house, with brick or stone chimneys, glass windows, etc., and that it be done at the public expense. He also observed, that after this was done, it might, perhaps, be thought best to build another of the same description for the boys, but we could do this first. Giving us a letter directed to the Agent, he observed, "I have written to him to pay the balance of your account, for what you have expended on these buildings, and also to defray the expense of the house, you are now about to build. Make a good house, having due regard to economy."<sup>17</sup>

The mission was a compact efficient unit, according to the detailed description of it which was made by a visitor sometime in the early 1820's. He wrote:

On approaching it from the northeast, you come to the creek at the distance of fifty rods from the principal mission house. Immediately, you leave the woods, and crossing the stream, which is from four to six rods wide, you enter an area of cleared ground, on the right of which appear numerous buildings of various kinds and sizes. At the distance of a few steps stand a grist mill and a saw mill, turned by a canal three-quarters of a mile in length, which conducts the water from a branch of the creek in the neighborhood. A little farther on, you come to a lane, on either side of which are several houses occupied by laborers and mechanics of various description. Following the lane, which runs across the cleared ground, you

<sup>17</sup> The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, *First Ten Annual Reports*, 240.

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pass a large and commodious barn, with some other buildings, and are conducted directly in front of a row of houses, which forms the principal part of the settlement and makes a prominent appearance in the view of Brainerd.

Nearly in the center of the row is the mission house, two stories high, having a piazza its whole length, with a pleasant court yard in front of it. It is occupied by the superintendent and other missionaries. Behind it, immediately connected with it, is the dining hall and kitchen for the establishment. On your right, and at the distance of a few feet, stands another building of two stories, which is used for the instruction of the girls. It is well finished, and was built by the particular direction of President James Monroe, who called here in May, 1819, on his tour through the western States. Many smaller buildings are ranged on the right and left of these two, and afford convenient lodging places for the children, and other persons connected with the institution.

Passing onward, about thirty rods, to the end of the lane which had been mentioned, you come to the schoolhouse for the boys; which stands in the edge of the woods, and is large enough to accommodate one hundred scholars. On the Sabbath, it is used as a place of worship. The whole number of buildings belonging to the institution exceeds thirty. They are, most of them, however, constructed of logs, and make but a plain appearance.

The ground, on the south and east of the lane (the direction of the lane is northeast to southwest), is divided into a garden, an orchard, and several other lots, which are neatly fenced in, and present a pleasant prospect in front of the mission house. In the corner of the orchard, next to the schoolhouse, is the grave-yard, where lie the bodies of those who have died at the institution and among them the remains of the great and good man, the Reverend Doctor Samuel Worcester.

The whole circumference of the ground which has been described may not, perhaps, include fifty acres, but being in the midst of a wilderness, whose deep forests appear on every side, it presents to the beholder a scene of cultivation and of active and cheerful life, which cannot but inspire him with pleasure. To the Christian, who contemplates the moral wilderness by which it is surrounded, it presents a prospect more delightful than tongue can express.<sup>18</sup>

Whether in the dining room with its five long tables set with pewter plates, tincups, and iron spoons; in the common sitting room where the girls gathered with work baskets in the evening; in the classroom

<sup>18</sup> Walker, *op. cit.*, 105-108.

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or on heavy outdoor duties, the influence of the missionaries was always felt. Their judgment was sorely tried when an Indian from the least civilized part of the tribe applied for admission, or when a lass believed to be too beautiful to be successful at school sought training. The boys, however, were likely to become preachers, teachers, and interpreters, and the girls energetic spreaders of the faith. Frequently the students took or were given the English names of contributors to the work. So one finds among the Cherokees at their desks in the Brainerd classroom individuals who answered when the following roll was called: John Emerson, Manasseh Cutler, Samuel Worcester, Josiah Meigs, Caroline Smelt, John Knox Witherspoon, and John W. Latta. Possibly the strangest of these appellations was that held by the little Indian boy called Boston Recorder, after the newspaper of that title.

The work of the Brainerd Mission was welcomed by the Cherokees and received the support of the more progressive element of the tribe. Branches of the mission were established in other parts of the Nation with Brainerd serving as the parent institution. Nine of these were opened between 1819 and 1836. Some of them operated for only a few years, while others continued until the Cherokee Removal.

The initiative for Methodist missionary work apparently originated with the Indians. In 1822, Richard Riley, a Cherokee, who lived near Fort Deposit, Alabama, invited the Reverend Richard Neely, a circuit rider, to preach at his home. There was an immediate response by the Indians to the opportunity to attend the meetings. The result was the acceptance by the Tennessee Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church, of the responsibility to develop missions and schools among the Cherokees. At the conference held in 1822, assignments were made to carry on the new activity.

About the same time, Joseph Coody asked two Methodist ministers to preach at his home, which was in Chattanooga Valley between Poplar Springs, now Rossville, Georgia, the home of John Ross, and Lookout Mountain. In two years, the membership had grown to eighty. Coody, consequently, requested that a missionary be appointed to the station, and pledged one hundred dollars annually to support the school and mission.



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In recognition of the developing importance of the work, the Tennessee Conference, at its meeting in the fall of 1823, divided the Indian Nation into two districts. The Reverend Mr. Neely was continued in his post at the Lower Cherokee Mission, and the Reverend Nicholas Dalton Scales was appointed to the Upper Cherokee Mission, which lay wholly in Tennessee. Scales's headquarters were at the Coody place and according to his instructions he was to devote most of his efforts to "teaching the children in the ordinary literary branches." At the close of 1824, eighty-one Indians and twenty-one Negroes were members of the Upper Cherokee Mission.

The Methodists, like the Brainerd missionaries, used Cherokees as interpreters and "exhorters." Some of the Indians became licensed ministers, as they did among the other faiths which engaged in missionary activities among them. The Reverend Mr. Scales, according to the Cherokee custom, became an adopted member of the tribe when he married Mary Coody, the daughter of Joseph and Jennie Ross Coody.<sup>19</sup> In 1828, Bishop William McKendree visited the Cherokee missions. There were then three circuits, which included about one-half of the Nation and had about 700 members. Three camp meetings were held in September, at which the Indians and ministers, alike, lived in tents. Four schools were maintained with about 100 students. The one near Lookout Mountain was said to have contained the "most advanced pupils in all the Nation."

These encouraging developments soon began to suffer as Georgia started its positive efforts to force the removal of the Indians. In 1834, the Tennessee Conference discontinued its missionary activities among the Cherokees. However, the Holston Conference assumed the responsibility for carrying on the work for the Indians within its jurisdiction, which it did, until 1838, when the last of the Cherokees were moved west.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Jennie Ross was a sister of John Ross. This family relationship may contain the explanation of John Ross's sale of his property at Ross's Landing and Poplar Spring to the Scales, when he moved south in 1826.

<sup>20</sup> W. B. Posey, *The Development of Methodism in the Old Southwest, 1783-1824*, pp. 85-89.

Anson West, *A History of Methodism in Alabama*, pp. 384-403.

J. E. McFerrin, *History of Methodism in Tennessee*, III, 454, 469, 491.



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The part played by the circuit rider and missionary in influencing and assisting the Cherokees in their amazing progress from the people of a Stone Age culture to a plane of civilization comparable to that of the frontier cannot be overestimated. With meager funds and handicapped by the remoteness of their stations, the frontier religious leaders nevertheless kept stout hearts. By precept and example, they helped to keep the feet of the Cherokees straight in the path of progress as well as to introduce them to Christian principles and ethics. But in the end it was the vision and intelligence of the Indian leaders, themselves, which were the greatest influence in the nation's development.

More and more, the principal Cherokees sought peace, in order, as Little Turkey expressed it. "to live so that we might have gray hairs on our heads." Their country was growing smaller and smaller as a result of numerous land cessions. From the time of the expedition under Major Ore, which destroyed the Chickamaugas as a separate group in 1794, to 1819, twenty-four treaties which called for large or small cessions were made. On February 27, 1819, one of the most important councils was held at the instigation of John C. Calhoun, then Secretary of War. Nine agreements were made between the Cherokees and the Federal Government. These left to the Cherokees a wedge-shaped area which lay within the borders of four states, North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama. In Tennessee, this meant the giving up, except for a small area in the Great Smokies, all lands other than those which lay south of the Tennessee and Hiwassee rivers. So the region about Lookout Mountain, which had but a short time before been a hideout for the braves, became a part of the northern boundary of the nation.

The Tennessee River was the dividing line between white and Indian territory. On October 25, 1819, by act of the General Assembly of the state of Tennessee, Hamilton County was formed out of the newly ceded land immediately north of the river in the Lookout Mountain area. Although the political center of the Cherokee Nation had been moved south into the section lying within the boundaries of Georgia, the influence of the traffic on the river and Brainerd Mis-

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sion combined to keep the Ross's Landing region prominent in the affairs of the Indians.

The Cherokees had already shown evidence of a higher development than most American Indians. However, their ability to cultivate the civilized arts of peace was astonishing in this period. By 1826, there were to be found in the Nation 22,000 cattle, 7,600 horses, 46,000 swine, 2,500 sheep, 762 looms, 2,488 spinning wheels, 172 wagons, 2,942 plows, 10 sawmills, 31 grist mills, 62 blacksmith shops, 8 cotton machines, 18 schools, 18 ferries, and a number of public roads.<sup>21</sup> A considerable portion of the elder men retained their Indian dress in part, but the younger men all dressed like the whites who were about them, except that the greatest number still wore turbans in place of hats and substituted a blanket for a cloak in cold weather. Their homes varied greatly from "elegantly painted" houses or brick mansions to the meanest type of cabin. In general, the mass of the people lived in comfortable log houses. Either hewn or unhewn logs were used to make the one or two story structures whose floors were often puncheons and whose furnishings were limited.

One of the most elaborate establishments was that of Chief Joseph Vann, a mixed blood living near Spring Place, Georgia. There he occupied a two-story brick house, which reputedly cost \$10,000 and was designed by an architect from Philadelphia. It dominated a number of outbuildings, slave quarters, and mills, on a large plantation of which 800 acres were in cultivation. So extensive were Vann's economic affairs that he employed white overseers to manage them. His affluence cause him to be called "Rich Joe" by his fellows in order to distinguish him from his kinsman of the same name, who lived in another section of the Nation. However, the other Vanns were not poor people, as noted by a visitor to the home of the other Joseph Vann's brother in Vann's Valley: ". . . his house is elegantly painted outside, and in, and is beautifully located and furnished with the finest furniture, his wife amused us in the evening by playing most charmingly on her Piano."<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> *Niles Register*, XXX, 143.

<sup>22</sup> H. S. Gold, *Journal of Our Journey to Creek Path*, quoted in Allen Collection.

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Cultural interests in the Nation extended to other areas than music. One district, alone, possessed upwards of 1,000 books, which had been purchased from annuity funds received from the Federal Government. Adam Hodgson, an English traveler, who journeyed through the Nation in May, 1820, noted in his journal the cultured atmosphere which he observed in Cherokee homes. "We breakfasted at the house of a very intelligent farmer, whose wife was a half-breed Cherokee and whose children were as well behaved and better educated than those of some of our most respected farmers. On his bookshelves, I observed Robertson's *America*, the *Spectator*, and several periodicals, a Bible, a hymn-book and other religious works." The next night he spent "at the house of a Highlander, who married a Cherokee woman about thirty years since and who lives very much like a gentleman. Here we found a good library, maps and American and English newspapers—the latter most acceptable. The daughters who drank tea and breakfast with us were pleasing, well-behaved girls who had been educated at distant boarding schools. The father from his manners and information might have been living the last twenty years in England or Scotland, instead of among the Cherokees."<sup>23</sup>

This Scottish patriarch was Daniel Ross, whose wife was herself the daughter and granddaughter of traders. In 1830, Dr. Samuel A. Worcester of the mission reported to the Government that "though those of mixed blood are generally in the van, as might naturally be expected, yet the whole mass of people is on the march" along the path toward civilization.<sup>24</sup> One of the greatest aids to this development came from an unschooled member of the tribe. Sequoyah, who was also called George Guess or Gist by the whites, was of mixed blood. His portrait, made in 1828, shows an interesting, intelligent face. He could not read English, but with the aid of a speller, the alphabet and words of which were meaningless to him, he constructed a series of eighty-six characters which represented the sounds in the

<sup>23</sup> Adam Hodgson, *Letters from North America* I, 275-6.

<sup>24</sup> Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 254. Samuel A. Worcester was the nephew of the Rev. Samuel Worcester, who died and was buried at Brainerd in 1821.



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Cherokee language. After years of patient work in the face of domestic difficulties, ridicule, and discouragement, Sequoyah submitted his finished work to his people in 1821. Because of the remarkable fitness of the syllabary to the sounds of the Cherokee language, it could be used as soon as the characters had been learned. The Cherokees as a Nation immediately began to study, and it is claimed that "in the course of a few months, without school or expense of time or money, the Cherokees were able to read and write in their own language."<sup>25</sup> Thus without any thought of the remarkable exhibition of human creative genius which had made it possible, the Cherokees within a short time bridged the tremendous gap between oral tradition and written knowledge. The ability of the white man to communicate by means of the written word, which to the Indians was a large part of his mysterious power, was now also available to the Cherokee. In the long history of man's developing civilization, Sequoyah is the only known contributor of this sort, and the great trees of the American Far West which bear his name are a proper living monument to his genius.

Native converts and the missionaries soon began to translate parts of the Scriptures into Cherokee, and through the influence of Dr. Worcester, type was cast in Boston to print the language. In 1827, the Cherokee council resolved to publish a national newspaper, and Elias Boudinot was chosen to be its editor.

Boudinot was a nephew of Major Ridge and in typical Cherokee fashion had adopted his name from that of the famous Philadelphian while attending a mission school in Connecticut which the whites had befriended. The young Indian had gone to the school of the American Board at Cornwall, as did his cousin, John Ridge. The two of them aroused the quiet New England village by becoming engaged to two of the prominent young ladies of the community, Sarah Northrup and Harriet Gold. The townspeople burned effigies of the girls, and the school was closed by the scandal. However, a visit of Major Ridge to the community startled it out of its resentment.

<sup>25</sup> Mooney, *op. cit.*, p. 110.



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The stern, distinguished looking Ridge was a three-quarter blood. He had been involved in the border wars and as one of the important chiefs had led raiding parties attired in breech clout and armed with tomahawk and rifle. His intelligence led him to a realization that the battle against the whites was a hopeless one. He married an "English Cherokee," in other words, a woman whose parentage was part white and part Indian. With many others of his tribe, he joined the whites in the war against the Creeks and fought under Andrew Jackson at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend. His position among the Indians gave him a post of command in the contingent, and ever after he used "Major" as his first name, in imitation of the white custom. He became, along with others of the nation's principal men, wealthy in the years that followed, and an interested supporter of the missionaries.

Major Ridge accompanied John north for his wedding. The residents of Cornwall were startled at the appearance of the old chief. He came "in the most splendid carriage" the community had ever seen. He was surrounded by servants who fulfilled his every wish. With coat trimmed in gold lace and with the dignity of a born aristocrat, Major Ridge soon convinced the people of Cornwall as well as the families of the two girls that he was not their conception of an ordinary Indian. "On the Sabbath he could not be seen by strangers as 'it was the day of worship of the Great Spirit, and if he went to church, they would worship him.'" This respect for the Sabbath did not imply a lack of democratic spirit, for he diplomatically saw all who called upon him in his stay of two weeks.

The story of the marriage of these two girls of gentle New England birth to the two Cherokees is one of the most interesting to be found in American social history. After the weddings, the two couples moved to the heart of the Cherokee country, but not to the ordinary conception of an Indian hut or tepee. They had nice homes which were "neatly furnished," where they raised their families of children. "Mrs. Gold told us after their return," [from a visit to the two girls and their Indian husbands], a friend records, "that she never had seen such a store of provisions. In one room upstairs was a barrel of coffee, a barrel of sugar, and everything good they needed. Mr. Boudi-

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not was a kind, good husband, and Mrs. Gold declared that Harriet had married just as well as any of her other children.”<sup>26</sup>

Boudinot was the editor of the *Cherokee Phoenix* for the whole period of its existence. It was printed at New Echota on a hand press by two white printers and a half-breed Cherokee apprentice. The first issue appeared February 21, 1828, as a bilingual publication, the editorial contents in English being addressed to white readers. They characterize the attitude of the Cherokees and state in part: “We would now commit our feeble efforts to the good will and indulgence of the public, praying that God will attend them with his blessings, and hoping for the happy period when all Indian tribes shall arise, Phoenix-like, from the ashes and when the terms, ‘Indian depredation,’ ‘War-whoop,’ ‘scalping-knife,’ and the like, shall become obsolete, and forever be buried deep underground.” For about six years the *Phoenix* was published as a weekly and in the same time the press printed approximately 14,000 copies of religious books.<sup>27</sup>

While these cultural and economic developments had been receiving Cherokee attention, sight was not lost of the need for political adaptation also. Gradually though the years the Nation grew more unified as a result of the constant threat from the land-hungry whites. The Grand Council, composed of the principal chiefs, continued to act for the Nation, but more and more the leaders realized that even more effective organization should be devised. After a visit to Washington in 1808, where they received the encouragement of President Jefferson for the “establishment of fixed laws and a regular government,” the leaders drew up a brief code of laws. Two years later, a further advance was registered by the formal abolition of the custom of clan revenge; punishment was taken from clan hands and placed in those of the General Council. In 1820, the Council determined to di-

<sup>26</sup> Walker, *op. cit.*, pp. 158-163, quoting manuscript of Mrs. Ellen M. Gibbs, in which a full account of the “two Cherokee romances” is given. Mrs. Boudinot died in 1836 in New Echota, while Mrs. Ridge (Sarah Northrup) moved over the “Trail of Tears” with the tribe and lived to old age in the Indian Territory west of the Mississippi.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 231-237.

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vide the Nation into eight districts, in each of which there was located a council house where court was held twice a year. District officers administered all purely local business. A code was completed for the administration of taxes and internal improvements, and regulating payment of debts, liquor traffic, and marriages. Franchise was limited to Cherokee citizens and punishments were stated for crimes and misdemeanors.

In 1826 a convention was called to draw up a written constitution for the Cherokee Nation. Adopted June 26, 1827, it was modeled after that of the United States, with the functions of the three branches of government defined. There were specific provisions included to take care of the peculiar circumstances of the Cherokees who formed a Nation while their own traditions and folkways were on the verge of being swallowed by another people of very different attitudes. To safeguard their very existence, they incorporated in Article 1, Section 2, the following provision:

The sovereignty and Jurisdiction of this Government shall extend over the country within the boundaries [as stated in the Treaty of 1819] . . . and the lands therein are, and shall remain, the common property of the Nation; but the improvements made thereon, and in the possession of the citizens of the Nation, are the exclusive and indefeasible property of the citizens, respectively, who made; or may rightfully be in the possession of them; Provided that the citizens of the Nation possessing exclusive and indefeasible rights to their respective improvements, as expressed in this article, shall possess no right nor power to dispose of their improvements in any manner whatsoever to the United States, individual states, nor citizens thereof; and that whenever such citizen or citizens shall remove with their effects out of the limits of this Nation and become citizens of any other Government, all their rights and privileges as citizens of this Nation shall cease. . . .<sup>28</sup>

Under this Constitution the Cherokee Nation became a working Republic, although several states and the Federal Government claimed sovereignty in the same territory. It solidified the Nation politically and helped its leaders to prepare for the inevitable strug-

<sup>28</sup> Emmet Starr, *History of the Cherokee Indians*, pp. 55-63.

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gle to retain their homeland. In the writing of the Constitution, the Cherokee demonstrated one of the brightest pages in their development. It was the climax of a rapid evolution based upon bitter experience with the white man's political sagacity.



## CHAPTER V

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### *"The Trail Where They Cried"*

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IN October, 1828, at New Echota, John Ross, the first elected Principal Chief under the new Constitution,<sup>1</sup> stood before the General Council of the Cherokee Nation and repeated in deep sincerity the oath of office: "I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation, and will; to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend, the Constitution of the Cherokee Nation."

This solemn occasion, viewed with quiet respect by the assembled representatives of the Nation, who ran the gamut from men but little removed from savagery to others who could sit with credit to themselves in any social or political group in America, was a climax in the career of Ross. He was born in Turkeytown on the Coosa River, at the time within the boundaries of Georgia, on October 3, 1790. At the most only one-eighth Cherokee he was reared as an Indian under the watchful eye of his father, the trader Daniel Ross, and his mother, Mollie McDonald Ross. About 1800 his father built a home near the foot of Lookout Mountain on Chattanooga Creek which was marked "Ross" on the old maps. Nearby Daniel Ross maintained a trading

<sup>1</sup> The Constitution provided that the General Council at its second annual session after the convening of the Constitutional Convention should elect a Principal Chief. In the interim, three chiefs served: Path Killer and Charles R. Hicks died in office, while William Hicks made himself unpopular by his association with officials of the state of Georgia. The accounts are vague and in disagreement concerning these details.

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stand and a deerskin tannery which stood near the mouth of the creek. John, who was the eldest son in the growing Ross family, was said to have been a favorite of his grandparents, the McDonalds, then living at their home, Poplar Springs. It was on the plantation which John McDonald had registered in the name of his wife under the provisions of the Treaty of 1817, which allowed certain Cherokees to have reservations of land in the Nation allotted them as private property. After the death of Mollie Ross in 1808 John made his home for a time with his grandparents and aided in conducting his grandfather's store, located on the Federal road where it passed through the gap.

Daniel Ross was a cultured man, as the traveler Hodgson observed, and gave his son the best training he could. After early years in the school which had been started at his home with the assistance of Gideon Blackburn, the elder Ross sent John to an academy at Kingston. In that back-country metropolis, he also received additional business experience by working with the merchants in their stores.

At the age of eighteen, John was ready to take over much of the responsibility of McDonald's affairs, but business did not take all his time. His public career started in 1809, when he accepted the appointment from Colonel Meigs to journey to the western Cherokees as an ambassador of good will to try to keep them in peaceful relations with the United States. In the company of an old Cherokee, a half-breed, and a Mexican, Ross loaded the "Clapboard Ark" with gifts and set out on his first official mission. From it, he gained an experience for later political activity.<sup>2</sup> On his return he resumed the quiet life of the trading stand at Rossville, interspersed with trips through the Cherokee country. These excursions gave him a thorough knowledge of his Cherokee countrymen and the geography of the Nation. Reserved, tactful, and honest in all his dealings, he won the respect and confidence of his people, despite the fact that his personal appearance was more that of a typical Scot than an Indian.

The Creek Campaign of 1813-14, which was a part of the War of 1812, again found Ross absent from the store. Along with a considerable body of Cherokees he enlisted in a regiment to co-operate with

<sup>2</sup> McKinney, *op. cit.*, II, 160-162; R. C. Eaton, *John Ross and the Cherokee Indians*, p. 24; Mooney, *op. cit.*, p. 224.

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the Tennessee troops, some of whom gathered at Camp Ross, near Lookout Mountain. During the campaign he served as an adjutant and was under fire in the battle of Horseshoe Bend. At the close of the war, Ross widened his activities and became associated with Timothy Meigs, the son of Agent Meigs, in the firm of Meigs and Ross. Their store was at the Hiwassee Garrison where the Hiwassee River flows into the Tennessee.

Timothy Meigs died in December, 1815, but Ross continued in the mercantile business. He took as his associate his brother, Lewis, who handled their affairs at the agency while John concentrated his efforts in the Lookout Mountain area. It was about this time that he established a landing, warehouse, and ferry on the south bank of the Tennessee River about a mile from the start of the great bend which forms the Moccasin. This immediately became known as Ross's Landing.<sup>3</sup> Here, merchandise was brought in by river boat to be sold at the general store in the gap.

The landing was not an elaborate affair. Descriptions of it by the missionaries who used the facilities demonstrate its lack of pretensions. One said it was “a kind of shanty for goods and a log hut for the ferryman. All, all the region within the sight of Lookout's summit was then a wilderness, with here and there an Indian cabin and ‘truck-patch.’”<sup>4</sup> The ferryboat was no more impressive. A woman traveling to the Brainerd Mission wrote in 1820 about her fears while crossing the river in time of flood on the “old and dangerous” ferry. Nor did she feel happier at the prospect of the drive still necessary before arrival at the Mission, as after leaving the rude huts of the small community she and her companions again found themselves “strangers in a dark forest.”<sup>5</sup>

The developing importance of the area led to the establishment of a post office at the store in the gap in 1817, called Rossville. John

<sup>3</sup> Ross's Landing was located near the foot of Market Street in present Chattanooga. Some confusion has existed about the exact location because Daniel Ross also had a landing which was established earlier and was about three miles farther down the river.

<sup>4</sup> *Chattanooga Commercial*, Feb. 24, 1878. Letter printed from Loving S. Williams, one of the missionaries at Brainerd in 1817.

<sup>5</sup> Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

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Ross was made postmaster. The semiweekly mail was brought in by stage from Nashville and Augusta. According to stories handed down by old settlers, twelve horses were required to haul the stagecoach with its passengers and baggage over the spur of Lookout Mountain. Rossville was also one of the relay stations for a change of horses.

Upon the death of his grandparents—John McDonald in 1824 and his wife in 1825—Ross inherited the business and their holdings at Rossville. His political activities had been growing more important in this period. He was made a member of the Cherokee National Committee in 1817 and in 1819 was chosen president of that body. He held the position for eight years, inasmuch as none of the others, as one historian states, was comparable to him in his relations with the officials of the United States.<sup>6</sup> His honesty was demonstrated dramatically to his fellows at a meeting of the Council in 1823, when he exposed the efforts of two United States commissioners to bribe him to secure his support for a treaty ceding more lands. His constant determination to resist further encroachments of the whites endeared him to the Cherokees, who came more and more to rely upon his leadership.

Among the first problems with which he became involved as a member of the Council was the effort to move the Indians west of the Mississippi River in 1817. Voluntary migration to the west had started as early as the last decades of the eighteenth century. The constant encroachment of the whites had limited the hunting area of the Indians. By 1817, two to three thousand of them had sought the freer life in the west. They were, however, given no definite area of land, as the Federal Government maintained there had been no compensating cession within the boundaries of the Nation. In an attempt to adjust the difficulty, a group of commissioners—General Andrew Jackson, General David Meriwether, and Governor Joseph McMinn—who represented the Government, met with Cherokee leaders at Hiwassee and the Treaty of July 8, 1817, was signed.

Under this treaty, the Indians ceded four small areas. The Government, in turn, granted to the emigrants a tract within the present state of Arkansas, and promised to pay for the improvements abandoned

<sup>6</sup> Gabriel, Ralph H.; *Elias Boudinot, Cherokee, and His America*, p. 138.



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by those who moved west. The Government furthermore agreed to furnish boats and supplies for the journey.

The majority of the Indians were opposed to removal. “They declared that the great body of the Cherokee desired to remain in the land of their birth, where they were rapidly advancing in civilization, instead of being compelled to revert to their original savage conditions and surroundings.”<sup>7</sup> Despite the opposition among the Indians, plans were carried forward for the removal of those who accepted the opportunity. By 1819, several thousand more had moved.

Various points of view were advanced to the Indians in an effort to guide their thinking about their future. Governor McMinn called upon them all to move at once. He pointed out the corrupting influences which could result from constant contact with the frontiersmen. At a council, convened at his request, he explained the advantages of the native life in Rousseau-like terms. On the other hand Secretary of War John C. Calhoun, who was in constant touch with Cherokee affairs, noted that the Indians were “becoming like the white people.” He advised that they persist in this development, inasmuch as the alternative would be removal or extinction. However, he went on to point out that there was no need for the Indians to retain their large holdings of land in such a new way of life. Smaller holdings, worked hard and well, would suffice.<sup>8</sup>

Colonel Meigs, in supporting the idea advanced by the Secretary of War, carried it a bit further. In his opinion, the Indians had advanced so far on the road to civilization that government aid was no longer necessary. The lands should be divided among the members of the Nation, with all the surplus being disposed of for their benefit. More radical than these was the suggestion that full rights of citizenship be conferred upon them by the states in which they lived. President Monroe supported the ideas of Meigs, but there was a wave of opposition from the states concerned.<sup>9</sup>

Meigs's sincere friendship was a great boon to the Indians. He

<sup>7</sup> Mooney, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

<sup>8</sup> C. C. Royce, *The Cherokee Nation of Indians*, (U. S. Bureau of American Ethnology, 5th Annual Report), p. 224-226.

<sup>9</sup> Mooney, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

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accompanied parties of them to Washington in an effort to ameliorate the demands of the states. His interest was not only in the whole tribe but extended to the individuals within it. In January, 1823, just after he passed his eighty-second birthday, he moved into a tent so that his more comfortable quarters could be used by an elderly chief, who was visiting him. He contracted pneumonia from the exposure and died. For more than twenty years he had lived among the Cherokees. The death of the "White Path" removed from the Indians an intercessor by whom they could approach the Federal Government with greater hope.

The frontiersmen typically had no interest in solutions which would keep the Indians where they were. The growing population pressure on the borders of the Indian country kept Georgia's eyes focused on the domain held by the Cherokees within the state. The obligation assumed by the Federal Government in 1802, when Georgia ceded her western lands to Federal control, was not forgotten. At that time the state had been promised that the Indian title to lands would be extinguished "whenever the same can be done on peaceable terms." In 1822, Georgia inquired if the United States was keeping her part of the bargain. The neighboring states of Tennessee and the Carolinas had been able to wrest practically all of the Cherokee lands within their borders from the tribe, and Georgia was jealous of their success. Moreover, Georgia had become the very heart of the Cherokee Nation since the Indians had emigrated from the ceded lands largely to areas within its borders.

John Ross was among the new Cherokee residents of the territory over which Georgia was trying to enforce its claim. His duties as a political figure made it advantageous for him to be closer to the center of the Nation. In 1826, he sold his property at Rossville to Nicholas Dalton Scales, the Methodist minister who had married his niece, Mary Coody. Scales took over the business at Rossville, and in partnership with Pleasant H. Butler bought Ross's Landing and the warehouses on the Tennessee. Ross built a home for himself near the head of the Coosa River, close to the site of the present Rome, Georgia. Here he not only continued his activities as a political leader but joined in other efforts to aid the civilizing influences within the

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Nation. He joined the Methodist Episcopal Church there, and his home became a center of that denomination.<sup>10</sup>

Georgia's pressure on the Federal Government grew and the arguments of its representatives were insistent, but the National Government was deaf to the plea for immediate removal. The national policy was based on the belief that opposition among the Cherokees could be “conquered by a little perseverance and judicious management.” Though this belief was interpreted in every possible way, results were not forthcoming, as Cherokee patriotism mounted. Georgia's protests continued to be positively stated. In spite of treaty recognition and diplomatic courtesies shown visiting Cherokees in Washington, Georgia authorities maintained that the Indians were mere tenants, who occupied a portion of the state at its will. So when the Cherokees adopted their independent republic in 1827, with the idea of perpetuating their distinct community, Georgia decided that the abandonment of the Federal Government's peaceful policy toward the Cherokees must be forced.

On January 26, 1828, Governor John Forsyth of Georgia sent a copy of the Cherokee constitution, which he termed “presumptuous,” to President John Quincy Adams, and asked what the Federal Government planned to do about the “erection of a separate government within the limits of a sovereign state.”<sup>11</sup> In October of the same

<sup>10</sup> West, *op. cit.*, pp. 395-96. West relates a story of a United States army officer, who was in the Cherokee country in 1830 and attended a religious service at Ross's home as a guest. The account reads: “There were present about fifty Indians, who were dressed much after the manner of white people, and in garments of their own manufacture. There were at and participating in that service two regularly ordained preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, one a full blood Indian and the other one-fourth white. The service was conducted in the Cherokee language according to the order of service used by the Methodist Episcopal Church. The hymns sung by the congregation were in the Cherokee language, having been translated from the English, and the tunes were English. Hymn books printed in Cherokee were used on that occasion, so says the reporter, and nearly all the congregation participated in the singing. The Scriptures were read, a sermon preached, and exhortations were delivered after the style of the Methodists of the time. The congregation was orderly, attentive, and devout. Christ was owned in the wilds of the Cherokee Nation, and worshipped in the tongue of the savage tribe, and the wilderness and the solitary place was made glad.”

<sup>11</sup> Royce, *op. cit.*, p. 24.



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year, John Ross assumed the office as Principal Chief and the next month Andrew Jackson was elected President of the United States. The South and West had rallied to the support of Jackson, who, they had every reason to believe, would deal favorably with frontier problems. Jackson's reputation as an Indian fighter convinced the people of the frontier areas that he would realize that Indians and whites could not live together as neighbors. He had also placed himself on record as early as 1817 for removal. The Federal Government would now, they thought, take a firm stand for removal. The legislators of Georgia were so positive that a new policy would follow Jackson's election that on December 20, 1828, approximately three months before his inaugural, they passed an act annexing all the Cherokee lands within the state's borders and extending the jurisdiction of its laws to the territory. This was to take effect June 1, 1830.

One of the most prominent of the Georgians in this controversy was Wilson Lumpkin. He was a member of the House of Representatives in Washington from 1827 to 1831. Later he was governor of the state and a United States senator. In a book which he wrote on the history of the removal, he stated his reasons for favoring the evacuation of the Cherokees. The Cherokees had a constitution and courts, and asserted the right to govern themselves. The Federal Government claimed the right to exercise its laws, and Georgia had extended its jurisdiction over the Cherokee area. Thus, there were three sets of laws in conflict, with the "different governments liable to daily collision—neither yielding to the other the right of exclusive or superior jurisdiction." His own intention was to clear up the situation and to improve the condition of the Indians "by placing them beyond the jurisdiction and the control of the state government, and where the Federal Government might, unmolested by state authorities, carry out its benevolent designs of preserving and civilizing the remnant tribes of the original race."<sup>12</sup>

Although Lumpkin followed this by stating that his first purpose was to rid the state of Georgia of the complicated problems of its Indian population, there was truth in his other statements. No one

<sup>12</sup> Wilson Lumpkin, *The Removal of the Cherokee Indians from Georgia*, 1827-1841, I, 42-44.



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knew the geography and resources of the state of Georgia better than he. In 1825, as a member of the board of public works of the state, he had made a survey of the Indian country. He had seen its potentialities, and had visited many of the principal Cherokees. He knew, also, that the Indians and the whites saw things from irreconcilable points of view.

The first attempt to exploit the valuable natural resources in the Cherokee country was an effort to utilize its iron ore in 1807 by Colonel Elias Earle of South Carolina. He had prospected through the Nation to discover a site, convenient to water power, iron ore, and limestone, upon which to construct iron works and smith shops. He settled upon a tract where the South Chickamauga Creek enters the Tennessee River. Some of the chiefs saw the advantages to the Nation and supported Colonel Earle's project. At a meeting held at Hiwassee December 2, 1807, arrangements were consequently made for a cession of six square miles to the Federal Government, from whom Colonel Earle and his associates were to lease the land and erect the necessary buildings for the operation.

Within a few months, President Thomas Jefferson submitted the treaty with the Indians to the Senate for ratification. He pointed out the benefits which would accrue to the Cherokees and to the United States. There were, he said, a few dissenting members of the tribe, but he asked for approval nevertheless. Colonel Earle, secure in his belief that all would be well, gathered workmen and started them in several parties from Greenville, South Carolina, with wagons loaded with equipment and supplies. Although permission had been secured from the Indian Agency to pass through the Nation, some of the dissidents among the Cherokees began to organize opposition. The first evidences were insulting remarks and accusations that the whole thing was a conspiracy to steal the land of the Indians. As the parties wound their way over the rough Federal Road, they began to encounter stiffer resistance. One of them was stopped by a group of armed Indians; among them was The Ridge, who walked over to the leader of the whites, seized his gun and shot it in the air, as an evidence of his contempt for the whole proceeding. Other shots were fired and tomahawks drawn. This determined opposition caused the

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whites hurriedly to retrace their steps and to abandon the project.

All other groups were likewise frustrated in their efforts to reach the proposed site. Although it is apparent that only a small minority of the Cherokees, led by James Vann, the father of "Rich Joe," was instrumental in the failure of the first iron works planned in the Lookout Mountain area to materialize, the episode was but another indication of the Cherokees' fear of the white man's penetration, and their determination to retain their homeland. This Indian opposition was one factor in the failure of the project, but the principal cause was the refusal of the state of Tennessee to agree to the cession of land within its borders, even though in the Cherokee Nation, to the Federal Government.<sup>13</sup>

Although this effort to take advantage of the mineral wealth of the Cherokee country was defeated, within a decade news of the discovery of gold in the North Georgia hills whetted an appetite which had been latent since the days of De Soto. Capital was necessary for the development of an iron industry, but any individual with a pick, shovel, and pan could wash gold. Sometime before 1820, word leaked out of the area that Indian children had found nuggets. Prospectors were soon abroad in the country, and by 1829, the gold fields of Dahlonega, located within the Cherokee Nation, were found. These discoveries greatly complicated the issue of sovereignty, since they not only added to the desire to rid the country of the Indians, but also brought a typical gold rush citizenry into contact with the Cherokees, in spite of laws which forbade such trespassing.

An even larger issue was becoming more and more dominant in the thinking of Georgians as well as that of all residents in the settled areas of the country. The frontiersmen, the vanguard of civilization, were gradually conquering the wilderness. As population grew, there was a steady movement toward the new areas. The inability of frontier means to carry goods and messages cheaply, safely, and quickly, retarded the nation's economic development and constantly created perplexing problems. But with the knowledge of turnpike roads, canals, and the newly conceived railway, people of the frontier as well as the seaboard marketing areas determined

<sup>13</sup> Allen Collection.

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to promote the construction of improved transportation facilities.

In 1825, Georgia established a Board of Public Works to formulate a program for the state. The governor was empowered to employ a state engineer, who was to make a statewide survey, accompanied by Wilson Lumpkin as a member of the board. The Cherokee country was included in the survey. After days in the field, Lumpkin and Engineer Hamilton Fulton became convinced that the topography was suitable for the construction of a railroad and so reported to Governor Troup.<sup>14</sup> This experience made Lumpkin an earnest advocate not only of internal improvements but of a specific railroad route to tie in with the Tennessee River at the spot where it breaks through the Cumberlands near Lookout Mountain. The Cherokee occupancy of the territory was the principal barrier to its accomplishment.

Lumpkin so well identified himself with the whole problem, as he himself wrote, that he “was called to the chief magistracy of Georgia by the unsolicited voice of the people of the state, with a special view to the then existing Indian relations.”<sup>15</sup> The path to removal of the Indians appeared straight and unbroken, as the ceaseless clamor for their lands increased. A popular song was slightly changed and widely sung:

All I want in this cre-a-tion  
Is a pretty little girl  
And a big plan-ta-tion  
’Way up yonder in the Cherokee nation.<sup>16</sup>

All these factors—mineral wealth, a feasible pathway to the west, and land,—had their influence upon the new governor as he took his chair.

The law extending the jurisdiction of Georgia over the Cherokee country had gone into effect June 1, 1830, and was followed by numerous others. Cherokee laws and customs were outlawed. The whole Nation was surveyed and divided into counties: “Land lots”

<sup>14</sup> Lumpkin, *op. cit.*, I, p. 39; James H. Johnston, *Western and Atlantic Railroad of the State of Georgia*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>15</sup> Lumpkin, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 250.

<sup>16</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, April 27, 1948; quoted in Alfred Mynders’ “Next to the News.”



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of 160 acres and "gold lots" of 40 acres were to be distributed to the whites by a lottery, in which each citizen was entitled to participate. Cherokee heads of families were allotted 160 acres as a homestead, but since no deed to the land was issued their residence was dependent upon subsequent action of the legislature. Indians were forbidden to testify against whites in court, the protection of which was therefore denied them. Contracts between whites and Indians were deemed invalid, which canceled practically all debts owed to the Cherokees. Assemblies for any public purpose were forbidden, and the Cherokees were prohibited from digging gold. All white men residing within the Cherokee country were required to take a special oath of allegiance to the state of Georgia, and were deprived of the opportunity to participate in the lottery.<sup>17</sup> This last was directed particularly at the missionaries and teachers, "who refused to countenance the spoilation."

Outside the state halls, aggressive individuals took matters in their own hands. Bands of armed men roamed the countryside; cattle and horses were seized, and many a cabin was fired. Atrocities all seemed to be committed by whites at this time. The Indians sought legal protection from the Federal Government. In Congress debate over a removal bill, which Jackson insisted was necessary, aroused national interest.<sup>18</sup> In the House of Representatives, Edward Everett, a leading member of that body from Massachusetts, remarked upon the use of the opportunity by men with no respect for law: "They have but to cross the Cherokee line; they have but to choose the time and the place where the eye of no white man can rest upon them, and they may burn the dwelling, waste the farm, plunder the property, assault the person, murder the children of the Cherokee subject of Georgia, and though hundreds of the tribe may be looking on, there is not one of them that can be permitted to bear witness against the

<sup>17</sup> Royce, *op. cit.*, pp. 259-264.

<sup>18</sup> The Congressional report, on which this bill was based, and the bill were written by John Bell of Tennessee, who insisted the pure-blooded Indians did not oppose removal. The agitation, he said, was created by a few whites and some half-breeds who dominated the tribe. However, Bell's biographer questions the objectivity of the Tennessean in view of his later speculation in Cherokee lands. J. H. Parks, *John Bell of Tennessee*, pp. 38-40.



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spoiler.”<sup>19</sup> The Cherokees, through Principal Chief Ross, petitioned the Supreme Court of the United States for an injunction to prevent the execution of these objectionable laws. This appeal was lost in 1831, as the decision of Chief Justice John Marshall held that the Cherokee Nation was not a foreign country and could not maintain action in the courts of the United States.

But soon a second Supreme Court decision brought temporary rejoicing within the Cherokee circles, since the court virtually reversed itself. Two of the Brainerd missionaries, Samuel A. Worcester and Elizur Butler, then living within the disputed territory, refused to take the oath of allegiance to Georgia. They were arrested by the Georgia militia and imprisoned. When their case came before the Supreme Court in March, 1832, the Court maintained that Georgia's acts to extend its jurisdiction over Indian Territory was unconstitutional. “The Cherokee Nation,” the last paragraph of the decision stated, “then, is a distinct community, occupying its own territory, with boundaries accurately described, in which the laws of Georgia can have no force, and which the citizens of Georgia have no right to enter, but with the assent of the Cherokees, themselves, or in conformity with treaties, and with the acts of Congress. The whole intercourse of the United States and this Nation, is, by our Constitution and laws, vested in the government of the United States.”<sup>20</sup>

This apparent oppression of the missionaries because of their sympathy for the Indians naturally increased the national interest in the circumstances. Governor Lumpkin, on receiving word of the decision, first tried to get the matter dropped by Worcester and Butler. The final outcome was an executive pardon and the release of the missionaries. President Jackson was in a dilemma, as the whole country looked on. To South Carolina, in the midst of the Nullification crisis, Old Hickory said, the laws of the nation must be executed. Of the Georgia case, he is reported to have said, “John Marshall has made his decision, now let him enforce it.” Georgia was thus given virtually a free hand by the Chief Executive.

The land lottery moved on as scheduled. The Indians were forced

<sup>19</sup> Mooney, *op. cit.*, p. 118. This speech was delivered May 19, 1830.

<sup>20</sup> J. P. Hall, *Cases on Constitutional Law*, p. 972-3

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to vacate their houses as Georgia citizens won them in the lottery. The house of John Ross was confiscated and the Principal Chief moved to Red Clay, Tennessee, which was chosen as the site of the new governmental center of the Nation since Tennessee was not so aggressively pressing its campaign against the Indians. The mansion and improvements of "Rich Joe" Vann were forcibly taken, amid scenes of chaos as two aspirants battled it out within the halls. Vann also moved north of the Georgia-Tennessee line and built a new home a few miles above Ross's Landing. The Rossville property of Scales was won by a man who immediately sold it to Thomas G. MacFarland.<sup>21</sup> These examples demonstrate what was taking place over the whole of the Cherokee country in Georgia in the years between 1832 and 1835.

The Nation was badly demoralized, politically and economically. The Federal annuity was being withheld, and the strain of the endless conflict was beginning to tell. Every manipulation possible was used to "burn fires around the Cherokees." Although the majority under Ross stood firm and were determined to fight to the end, a few men including the Ridges and Elias Boudinot began to question whether the struggle was worth the effort. The appearance of this fissure in Cherokee patriotism, which had been mounting throughout the controversy, was immediately noted and carefully nourished by Georgia and Federal authorities.

Two delegations of Cherokees went to Washington in February, 1835: one led by Ross represented the majority of the Nation; Major Ridge headed the other. Finding it impossible to reach agreement with Ross, Jackson appointed the Reverend J. F. Schermerhorn to negotiate with the Ridge faction. A preliminary agreement was reached in March, but it was rejected the following October by the Cherokee Council, which instead authorized Ross to arrange for a new treaty. Before he could leave for Washington on this mission, Georgians under Colonel W. N. Bishop crossed the line into Tennessee November 7, 1835, arrested Ross and his visitor, John Howard

<sup>21</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, February 2, 1936. MacFarland and his brother had surveyed the area in preparation for the lottery. The property remained in the possession of a member of the MacFarland family for more than a century.

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Payne, and carried them to Spring Place for confinement. Payne, who is best known for his internationally famous composition, “Home Sweet Home,” was in the Cherokee country seeking material on Indian lore and history for a book he planned to write. His arrest, Colonel Bishop explained, was caused by his description in his notes of the Georgia guard as more closely resembling “banditti” than troops.

This incident was to have many repercussions. Payne, upon his release, was ordered to leave the Indian country. He immediately published a detailed account of the “infamous outrages visited upon him.” This was widely read and created much comment. Tennesseans were provoked by the violation of the state’s sovereignty by the Georgia guard in making the arrests. This disregard of lawful procedure by an official of the state aroused criticism, even among Georgians, but it showed how far some of them were willing to go in their effort to rid the state of the Indians.

No explanation was given for the arrest of Ross, who was held for twelve days and then released. The *Cherokee Phoenix* was suppressed. Preparations had thus been carefully made for a decision agreeable to Georgia and the negotiators for the Federal Government in the meeting which was called to assemble at New Echota in December, 1835. The choice of site was destined to prevent the attendance of opposition leaders, who feared to place themselves within the jurisdiction of the Georgia guard. The Indians had lost the guidance of the missionaries by action of the Georgia laws. Their organ of information was prohibited to print. Moreover, Ross was prevented by his arrest from reaching Washington in time to use any influence.

The Reverend Mr. Schermerhorn descended from his professional ethics in using threats and inducements to get a large attendance of the 17,000 Cherokees at the meeting. On December 29, 1835, the removal treaty was signed. Schermerhorn, however, had to admit that only about three to five hundred men, women and children were present. No official of the Cherokee government signed the treaty for the Nation. Although it was said to have been made with the “chiefs, head men and people of the Cherokee tribe of Indians,”



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only a few of the important men agreed to it. Major Ridge, John Ridge, and Elias Boudinot were the best known of these. All who favored removal were looked upon as traitors by the followers of Ross.

Schermerhorn also received his share of disapprobation, as shown by the name he was given by the Cherokees. When the traveler, George W. Featherstonhaugh, visited the Nation in 1837, he remarked upon the practice of the Cherokees of giving an Indian name to the whites with whom they had important dealings. "If the proper name of the individual," he observed, "corresponds in sound with any term in their language, they simply translate it. On the other hand, if they can find no equivalent in their own tongue, they look for words, which sound like the name they are unable to translate, and if those words are at all appropriate to the individual, whether in his appearance, his habits and customs, or character, they use them to form his Indian name. . . . For the Reverend Mr. Schermerhorn, they had been so fortunate to find a name that corresponded precisely to their estimate of him, and which was immediately adopted by the whole nation, especially the women and children, who were extremely tickled with it. It was Skaynooyaunah, or literally the 'devil's horn.'" <sup>22</sup>

By the terms of the treaty and supplementary articles concluded March 1, 1836 the Cherokees ceded all their lands east of the Mississippi to the United States for \$5,000,000. In addition, they were to receive 7,000,000 acres in the West with the right to purchase for \$500,000 another 8,000,000 acres. An appraisal of the improvements on the Cherokee land was to be made, although the debts of the Indians were to be paid from money due them. The funds necessary for the removal and for subsistence for a year after was to be furnished by the United States. Likewise the Government agreed to appraise the missionary establishments within the Nation and to pay the societies for them. The removal was to be completed within two years. <sup>23</sup>

Chief Ross, never wavering in his resistance, protested the validity of the treaty, and nearly 16,000 Cherokees later signed petitions

<sup>22</sup> G. W. Featherstonhaugh, *A Canoe Voyage Up the Minnay Sotor*, II, 240-241.

<sup>23</sup> Royce, *op. cit.*, pp. 253-258.



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stating that they had been deceived. Georgia and Jackson, however, had apparently won their victory, but when the treaty came up for ratification in the United States Senate, strong resistance developed. The debate followed party lines very closely, and the Whigs took advantage of every opportunity to discredit the Executive. Senator Benton wrote that “speeches were characterized by a depth and bitterness of feeling such as have never been excelled on the slavery question.”<sup>24</sup> Ratification was only obtained by a one vote margin, after which the treaty was officially proclaimed by President Jackson on May 23, 1836.

Statements from Federal agents, in the Cherokee country to assist Indians who might want to remove early to their new home, demonstrated the great amount of opposition among the majority of the Nation. Fearing that disorders might occur, General John E. Wool was placed in command of Federal troops concentrated in the Nation, to “look down opposition.” East Tennessee volunteers under Brigadier General R. G. Dunlap were also ordered out.<sup>25</sup> Arriving early in 1837, General Wool went about his duty of disarming the Indians, but he soon found the task most disagreeable, as his sympathies went out to the Cherokees.<sup>26</sup> Dunlap also found that it was the Indian who needed protection rather than the whites. Throughout the country appeals were made in behalf of the Red Men, and political opponents continued to assail the Government’s policy.

<sup>24</sup> T. H. Benton, *Thirty Years View*, I, 625.

<sup>25</sup> The soldiers constructed stockades “make of split trees sharpened and set into the ground picket fashion. At about the space of every third picket was a porthole, from which a gun could be projected and given wide sweep. Gates were prepared for the use of men and horses, and inside log cabins were constructed for the men, set back a few feet from the pickets and between pickets and cabins were the stables. These cabins were double and each compartment was equipped with accommodations for six men. There was room for about a hundred within the enclosure.” The location of the one for which the description was given was on the Gardenhire farm near Ross’s Landing (in the area close to the present Chattanooga High School).

Soldiers would frequently slip out to attend parties and dances given by the Indians. Some of them remarked upon the beauty and talents of the Cherokee girls. Wiltse Manuscript, pp. 25, 55, 58, 59, 68. The material was secured by Wiltse in interviews with men who had been members of the militia which was sent into the Cherokee country.

<sup>26</sup> Grant Foreman, *Indian Removal*, pp. 271-272.

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General Wool was relieved of his onerous task in May, 1837, by Colonel William Lindsay. Between 1836 and 1838, approximately 2,000 Cherokees moved to the West. The first party to emigrate under the terms of the treaty left Ross's Landing on March 3, 1837, in a fleet of eleven flatboats.<sup>27</sup> However, the majority of the Nation followed Ross's leadership in active efforts to nullify the treaty. Up to the last moment, they had faith that it would not be consummated. Despite the pressure brought upon them to remove voluntarily, approximately 15,000 remained within the Nation. As it became clear that forcible removal would be necessary, General Winfield Scott was sent to replace Colonel Lindsay in May, 1838. Some of the Tennessee troops had withdrawn two years before, at which time General Dunlap stated that he "would never dishonor the Tennessee arms . . . by aiding to carry into execution at the point of a bayonet a treaty made by a lean majority against the will and authority of the Cherokee people."<sup>28</sup> When General Scott arrived, he nevertheless included Tennessee in the call for the militia which he sent to the governors of all the neighboring states.

His force of Federal troops, militia, and volunteers, finally totaled 7,000 men, more than the number of adult males within the Cherokee Nation. One of the officers in the contingent from the regular army was a young lieutenant of artillery, Braxton Bragg, who got his first glimpse of the territory in which he was to play a much larger role in future years.<sup>29</sup> On a fateful day in late May, Scott sent the troops out to gather the Indians, whose arms had already been taken from them.

Stockades were erected at the Old Agency on the Hiwassee, at Ross's Landing and at Gunter's Landing, in which the Indians were to gather preparatory to removal. Civilian contractors were employed in the effort. Some of the early steamboats on the Tennessee were used. Among them was the *Indian Chief*, formerly the *Knoxville*, under the command of Captain George Washington Harris, later to achieve fame as the author of the "Sut Lovingood's Yarns." General

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 273 ff., in which will be found a complete record of the journey as kept by Dr. C. Lilybridge, the attendant physician.

<sup>28</sup> Royce, *op. cit.*, p. 286.

<sup>29</sup> Letter from The National Archives, June 23, 1950.

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Scott was aboard the steamboat on one of the trips carrying Cherokees down the river. Scott, who was six feet four and had all the dignity and prestige of his office, countermanded an order of Captain Harris, a much smaller man. Harris immediately demanded to know if the general was responsible for changing the order. On receiving an affirmative answer, he said, “General, I am captain of this boat; my orders are going to be obeyed, and if you in any way attempt to interfere, my next order will be to put you ashore.” Even “Old Fuss and Feathers” could not stand in front of such determination on the part of the amateur navy, and no further trouble occurred.<sup>30</sup>

Most of the Indians were busy in their fields when the proclamations calling upon them to assemble for removal were posted. The spring of 1838 “opened most beautifully. There was no cold weather after the first of March. Vegetation advanced without any backsets from cold. The buds burst into leaves and blossoms; the woods were green and gay and merry with the singing birds. The Indians started to work in their fields earlier than ever before. . . . Fence corners and hedgerows were cleaned out. The ground was well plowed and the corn planted better than ever before. Soon it was knee-high and growing nicely. They cultivated only the richest bottoms. An Indian never worked an acre of poor land.”<sup>31</sup>

The majority of the Indians were thus pursuing at home and in schoolrooms, at least, in Tennessee, where the mission schools continued to operate, as normal an existence as they had known in a generation. Ross was still continuing to fight. Though he was growing more reconciled to the fact of removal, he hoped that the Federal Government would pay nearer the actual worth of the Cherokee lands. But time had run its course, and the Indians were confronted by the proclamation, issued May 10, by General Scott. Finality was in its cold type: “Unhappily the two years . . . allowed for that purpose [removal] you have suffered to pass away . . . without making any preparation to follow, and now . . . the emigration must be commenced in haste. . . . The full moon of May is already on the wane,

<sup>30</sup> E. A. Alderman and J. C. Harris, eds. *Library of Southern Literature*, V, p. 2100.

<sup>31</sup> Cotter, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-39.



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and before another shall have passed away every Cherokee, man, woman, and child . . . must be in motion to join their brethren in the far West." It further warned that escape or resistance was impossible in view of the number of troops present.<sup>32</sup>

As military transport was not available, General Scott hired wagons, teams and drivers in the area to carry the Indians to the stockades. One of the drivers so employed was William Cotter, a young boy who drove a yoke of oxen hired from his father. In his autobiography, he left a vivid picture of what he saw:

After all the warning and with soldiers in their midst, the inevitable day appointed found the Indians at work in their houses and in their fields. It is remembered as well as if it had been seen yesterday, that two or three dropped their hoes and ran as fast as they could when they saw the soldiers coming into the fields. After that, they made no effort to get out of the way. The men handled them gently, but picked them up in the road, in the field, anywhere they found them, part of a family at a time, and carried them to the post. Everything in their homes was left alone for a day or two and then hauled to the post. When a hundred or more families had been collected, they were marched to Ross' Landing. It was a mournful sight to all who witnessed it—old men and women with gray hairs, walking with the sad company. Provisions were made for those to ride who could not walk. . . .

In hauling the stuff from the cabins a file of six or more men went with me as a guard. They forced open the doors and put the poor, meager household effects into the wagons, sometimes the stuff of two or three families at one load. After following me a mile or two the guards galloped away, leaving me in worse danger than anyone else; for if there had been an Indian hiding out, I would have been the one to suffer.

But few of the Indians even went back to their homes. We turned the cows and calves together, as they had been apart for a day or two. Chickens, cats and dogs all ran away when they saw us. Ponies under the shade trees fighting the flies with the noise of their bells; the cows and calves lowing to each other; the poor dogs howling for their owners; the open doors of the cabins as we left them—to have seen it all would have melted to tenderness a heart of stone. And in contrast there was a beautiful growing crop of corn and beans.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Allen Collection.

<sup>33</sup> Cotter, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-40.



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Although General Scott desired that humane treatment be shown the Indians, and apparently that was generally the case, in some instances they were dragged from their homes mid disgusting scenes. Lesser officers were sometimes not inclined to be gentle, and the lawless mob of frontier scavengers which followed the troops pillaged and destroyed when the opportunity offered. As the Indians at many places were not given time to gather their possessions together before departure, they often witnessed the “hungry wolves” driving their stock away or plundering their material wealth before they passed the point where their homes were lost to view.<sup>34</sup>

Life in the stockades, where they awaited transport to the West, was disturbing and difficult also. Corn meal, fat salt pork and bacon, much of it musty and rank, was the basic ration furnished by the contractors, out to make a profit from the transaction. Medical aid was inadequate, and fevers and dysentery infected the areas. Trade boats, or “floating doggeries,” brought whisky and applejack, and their owners, like parasites, competed for the funds of the Red Men. The Indians, who ordinarily lived in comparative isolation, were thus suddenly crowded together and deprived of the healthful background to which they were accustomed.

Indians from Georgia were concentrated near Ross’s Landing. The first party to be placed on boats was chosen from them. Because the commotion was so great, the number who embarked on the steamboat with its brood of six flatboats was not recorded as the long trip started about noon on June 6, 1838. Like an ill omen for the future, terror faced the party almost as soon as the ropes which held the craft were loosed. When they reached the rough water of the mountain section, just a few miles from where they started, one of the boats was smashed against the river bank. No one was injured, fortunately, and the journey proceeded.<sup>35</sup>

A week later a second group was herded aboard a half dozen flatboats and dropped down the Tennessee on the first leg of their

<sup>34</sup> Mooney, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

<sup>35</sup> Foreman, *op. cit.*, pp. 291-292, quotes the original account of this episode in the *Hamilton County Gazette*, reported in *Louisville Public Advertiser*, August 24, 1838.

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trip to the West. Apparently because a sufficient number of boats was lacking, the third contingent to leave the stockade near Ross's Landing traveled in wagons or on foot.

The movement, undertaken as it was in the hot season, was attended by a great deal of sickness and mortality figures were high. The Indians submitted a proposal to General Scott that removal be suspended until cooler weather, and that the Cherokees be allowed to superintend it when resumed. General Scott agreed to the suggestion on June 19 with the provision that the Indians would all start by September first. Although this action was criticized by Andrew Jackson and the contract holders, it was not revoked, and the Indians remained in the camps at the places appointed by General Scott's proclamation. Approximately 2,500 of them spent the summer at Camp Cherokee near Ross's Landing.

The missionaries viewed these proceedings with almost the same emotions as the Indians. Some of them had spent a major portion of their lives in the Cherokee country, and felt an attachment to it almost equal to that of the natives, themselves. As the Indians moved westward, however, the reason for the mission's existence ended. The last communion service was held at the church at Brainerd on August 19, 1838. The missionaries packed their possessions, most of them to move west with their charges. One, Ainsworth Blunt, retired because of ill health, remained behind in charge of the property. When the Cherokee lands were opened for sale, he purchased the mission cemetery, to insure that it would not fall into the hands of speculators.<sup>36</sup>

The story of the Cherokees in their old home was almost over. Under Ross's leadership, thirteen contingents, comprising some 13,000, including Negro slaves, left for the West between October 1 and November 4, the delay having been caused by a prolonged drought. Although the earlier confusion disappeared under Ross's supervision, the unhappy emigrants suffered physical and mental tortures along the overland route which is now tragically called the Trail of Tears. Of the total number of Cherokees, it is estimated that about 4,000

<sup>36</sup> Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

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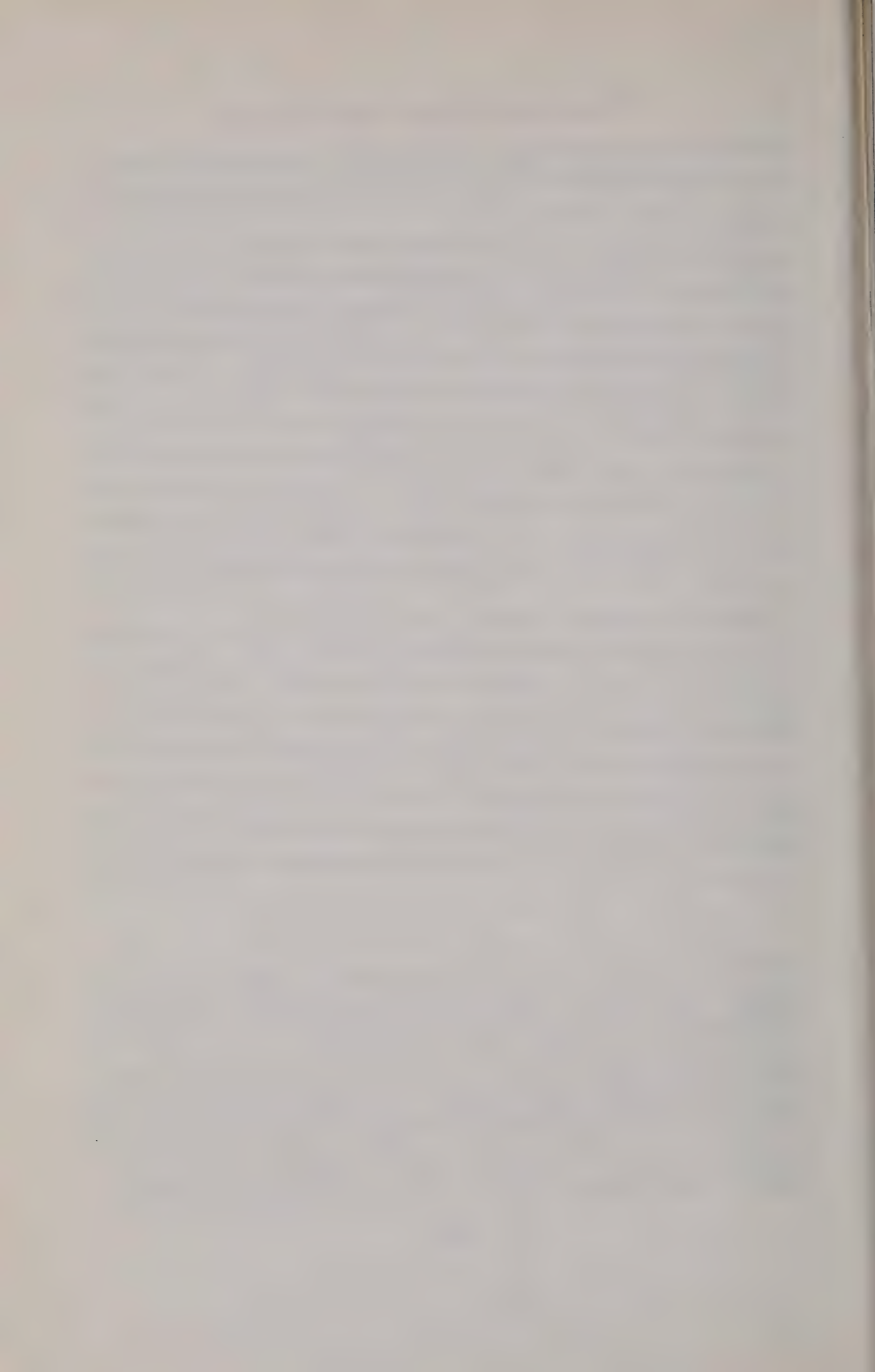
died in the course of capture and removal.<sup>37</sup> Among them was the wife of Ross whom the Principal Chief laid to rest in a small cemetery at Little Rock, Arkansas.

The climax in the life of John Ross had been reached in the futile struggle. On his shoulders rested the burdens of his people as well as his own personal loss. In the Cherokee lands he had grown to maturity; there he had married the mixed-blood Cherokee, Quatie Brown, and had brought up a family of six children. He had been happy with them despite the constant political difficulties in which he was engaged. Everything seemed ended, however, with the “Trail of Tears.” When the Ridges and Boudinot were killed after Removal, in accordance with Indian custom, for their part in negotiating the Treaty of 1835, Ross had to bear the bitterness of accusing fingers. Nevertheless, he continued to work for the welfare of his people, and was toiling for that end when death came to him in 1866 in Washington.

Only a few hundred Cherokees, by an agreement won from General Scott, remained east of the Mississippi.<sup>38</sup> Cowed and beaten, the majority were forced to forget their fear of the West, which, in their mythology, was the dark country from which blew the wind of death. Their faith in the white man’s word had been crushed more than once, but they had to accept another promise that they could stay in their new home, “while the grass grows and the rivers run.” Their beloved hills and valleys, which they had striven so to hold, were available wholly for white settlement. To the new American it was the proper way of Manifest Destiny.

<sup>37</sup> Mooney, *op. cit.*, p. 132-133. The Indians who left in the fall under their own supervision departed from Rattlesnake Springs, near the present Charleston, Tennessee. The Cherokees called the route they traveled *Nuna-da-ut-sun’y*, “The Trail Where They Cried.” Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 5 and 6.

<sup>38</sup> Scott’s permission for these Indians to remain in western North Carolina, where their descendants still reside, was won by the voluntary surrender of one named Tsali, his brother, and his two sons. The four had killed the soldiers sent to take them in for Removal. Scott, who realized the difficulty of seeking out each Indian in the mountainous area, was possibly glad of the opportunity to compromise. At any rate, he agreed to allow all the Indians in that area to remain, if Tsali’s group would come in for trial and punishment, which they did.





## CHAPTER VI

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### *Ross's Landing to Chattanooga*

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THE summer of 1838 was one of great activity at Ross's Landing. At the stockade called Camp Cherokee, about a half mile east of the landing, itself, the Indians were encamped under the guard of Federal soldiers and state militia, waiting for better weather for the long journey to the West. Parties of workmen, armed with axes and saws, cleared the numerous trees which grew tall and close on the river plain. They were creating the pattern of streets, which the surveyors had outlined from the landing to the southern limits of the new community.

The curious among the settlers who had gathered at the site of the embryo town watched the progress of the workers with interest. Daily they made their way among the stumps and tree trunks, avoiding as best they could the ponds and swampy sections of the lowland area. They were keenly aware of the meaning of the scene. They had come to the Landing to start a new community and for some of them a new sort of life. The financial panic, which for a year had disturbed people in older areas, was of little consequence to them. Their thoughts were of the future. One man, who had the voice of an orator and the enthusiasm of the pioneer, could not keep his ideas to himself. Whenever a group would stop to listen, he harangued them on the potentialities of their new home. Repeatedly he came back to his favorite theme, "This is the funnel of the universe."<sup>1</sup>

It is a striking phrase, and to degree it is an apt description of the remarkable confluence of valleys at the site. "Even the wild buffaloes

<sup>1</sup> L. L. Parham, *Chattanooga, Tennessee*, p. 6. The speaker was B. Rush Montgomery. He had won a reputation as a lawyer in Pikeville before his move to Ross's Landing, and was to be one of Chattanooga's prominent citizens for the remainder of his life.

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in the dim past with their natural instinct had selected this as their great crossing," one early resident wrote, "as their paths were plainly marked in the first settlement of the place."<sup>2</sup>

These optimistic observers foresaw the valleys as avenues of commerce. Their version of the American dream looked far into the future. It was bold enough to overlook the few crude shelters, which had been erected, and the primitive lanes which were being cut. It dismissed as temporary the numerous ponds and their adjoining swamplands which edged up to the new streets and spilled over into them in wet weather. To such self-persuaded prophets, opportunity in their new community was to be as frequent and as numerous as the coons in the neighboring flats, if only men as aggressive as the area's wild hogs (which could "make a fellow scale a tree quicker than anything. . .") were at hand to take advantage of it.

Such a potentially valuable natural crossroads on the paths which led from the areas in which corn and hogs were principal products to the cotton country would have been settled long before, if the Cherokees had not resisted so long. Despite the Indian claims to the land, however, some grants had been made in the area by North Carolina, which held jurisdiction over the territory to its west, as early as 1788 for service in the Revolution. When the state ceded its western territory to the Federal Government in 1790, it safeguarded the grants by stipulations included in the agreement. Upon the admission of Tennessee to statehood in 1796, a controversy developed among the three governments over the rights to the land. It was settled by the Compact of 1806, by which Tennessee obligated itself to protect the North Carolina grants, while the Federal Govern-

<sup>2</sup> This writer was John Pomfret Long, who arrived at Ross's Landing in April, 1836, and recorded the events of the town's formative period. Numerous short accounts by him appeared in local newspapers at various times during his lifetime and as reprints afterwards. More extensive discussions by him can be found in C. D. McGuffey, *Standard History of Chattanooga*, pp. 18-30, and J. E., MacGowan, ed., *Chattanooga: Its Past, Present and Future*, pp. 9 ff. Long came down the Tennessee on a flatboat from the little town of Washington in Rhea County, a few miles above Chattanooga, with his family and belongings. He chose Ross's Landing after a careful study of its possibilities. "Here is the gate," he wrote once, "through which the history of nations must pass. Upon further examination I found here all the requirements necessary to build a future city." So he built himself "a log cabin in the woods and settled down for life."

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ment gave up any claim to public domain in East Tennessee.<sup>3</sup>

When the Indians made a cession of the lands lying between Walden's Ridge and the Tennessee River, south of a line drawn west from the mouth of the Hiwassee, in 1817, the whole domain, except for the areas previously granted by North Carolina, reverted consequently to the state of Tennessee, which promptly put it up for sale. When on October 25, 1819, Hamilton County, named in honor of Alexander Hamilton, was created by the action of the state, the area had a population of 821, which included 16 free Negroes and 39 slaves.<sup>4</sup>

Hamilton County was officially organized in a temporary seat of government at Poe's Tavern, which stood at a prominent crossroads in the northerly section of the county. For a time, court was held and documents registered in the two-story log building, which continued also to be used for its ordinary purposes "as a public house and stock stand for the accommodation of travelers and stock drivers." Within a few months, a permanent site was chosen a few miles south of the tavern on a farm near the river. The small community which began to grow up about the courthouse was called Dallas.<sup>5</sup>

Only the Tennessee River then stood between the white settlements and the Cherokee Nation at Ross's Landing, which thus began to serve a double purpose. It was not only an important center of Cherokee interest, but it provided a convenient trading point also for the growing population of Hamilton County. At one time, this close proximity of white and red might have caused sporadic border warfare, but in this period it led to friendly intermingling and commercial activities. One consequence was an increasing infiltration of whites into the Indian territory, despite the prohibition of it by the treaties. This movement received additional impetus by the signing of the

<sup>3</sup> S. J. Folmsbee, *Sectional and Internal Improvements in Tennessee, 1796-1845.*, pp. 20-22.

<sup>4</sup> Some of the facts about the surveying and entering of lands in Hamilton County have a quality of curious interest. One man, desirous of having good bottom land for crops, entered 220 acres in a strip one acre wide along the river's bank. Another's line was described as crossing a creek at the spot where a man had been drowned (such transient line points still create difficulties for modern surveyors when they attempt to run accurate lines). The county line, itself, was ordered run so as to include the property of Patrick Martin in its boundaries.

<sup>5</sup> Lewis Shepherd, *Personal Memoirs*, pp. 124 ff.



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Treaty of New Echota. Realizing the importance of establishing occupancy rights, which gave priority for land claims, white settlers, many of them from Hamilton County, set themselves up as squatters on the Indian lands at or near Ross's Landing.

In some respects, life north and south of the river, whether white or Indian, at this time was very similar. Both groups were largely either peaceful farmers or trappers. However, there were differences. One was the consequence of the presence of Joe Vann, the wealthy Cherokee who, after his forced removal from Georgia, had located across the river from Dallas. Vann was a racing addict and built three tracks on his place, one a quarter mile, another a half mile, and the third a full mile in length. He held racing meets with opponents who brought their horses from far and wide. The races were, as always, a lodestone for the sporting element of the population. "There used to be great times when the races were run," one witness wrote later, "and the Indians would come in for miles to see them."<sup>6</sup>

Another colorful activity was the ballplay of the Indians. There were two important ball grounds in the area, one on Wolftever Creek and the other in Lookout Valley, one north, the other south of the Landing. Great contests occurred on both grounds and created intense excitement among the Indians, who were given to heightening their natural enthusiasm with whisky. Relations between the whites and their red neighbors were still not well enough established for the former to feel comfortable under such conditions. "I remember once," said a chronicler, "there had been a game of ball at Wolftever Creek and some of the Lookout Valley Indians were coming home. Cannon Cooper heard them coming and rushing in gave the alarm. A lot of us were . . . gathered at Colonel Dan Henderson's house. Five or six got in under the puncheon floor where there was a hole for storing potatoes." There they holed up so carefully that they did not realize the Indians had passed peacefully through the little community on their way home, until the nephew of one of them called down to ask them if they felt safe. Whereupon, somewhat chagrined by their

<sup>6</sup> Dugger Scrapbook. William Lawson Dugger reached Ross's Landing as a young boy, sometime in the early 1830's, and secured employment with Vann as a jockey. His reminiscences about his experience then and as a lifelong resident of Chattanooga are contained in a scrapbook in the possession of his son, Jesse T. Dugger.



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action and its result, they all came out and went about their business.<sup>7</sup>

The little community which was growing up at Ross's Landing, according to the best contemporary account we have, was "hastily built without any regard for any order or streets. . . ."<sup>8</sup> All, apparently, the early settlers were interested in was establishing themselves as occupants. Yet the town was making progress. John P. Long's mercantile establishment was advertising its wares sixty miles away, in the Athens' newspaper. Its stock contained not only those things which were required upon the frontier, but items which would interest a newly acquired citizenry and the soldiers gathered in the area preparatory for Removal. Although all were offered on "accommodating terms," prices were quoted in the advertisements. The items are listed in typical fashion, as jumbled as the stock in a backwoods country store would be.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Featherstonhaugh, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 210-220. The British-born traveler tells the story of his three-day stay in Ross's Landing, where he had great difficulty securing an equipage by which to continue his journey eastward. Though his visit to the area was in July, 1837, the Tennessee militia was already on hand, making preparations for the removal of the Indians.

<sup>9</sup> *Tennessee Journal*, Athens, Tenn., June 14, 1837, contains a typical advertisement. It listed:

100 bbl fresh flour	3 bbls Herring
25 kegs Embree's nails	4 bbls and 5 kits Mackerel
4 tons Bar Iron	1 do Salmon
3 tons Castings, assorted	5 kegs Epsom Salts
15 reams Writing Paper	3 boxes Mustard
25 sacks Rio Coffee	2 boxes G. P. Tea
35 bbl Tennessee Whiskey	2 kegs Salt Petre
25 bbl Wine, ass'd	1 do decanters
9 boxes Medoc Claret	1 bbl Chalk
4 baskets Champaign	3 boxes Smoking Tobacco
45 boxes raisins	2 kegs Ground Ginger
15 boxes window glass	3 boxes Stoughton's Bitters
20 kegs Eastern nails	3 do Tobacco
3 do Embree's do	2 do Stone's axes
3 groce Porter Bottles	5 bags Shot
1 basket sweet oil	2 coils Rope
1 bbl & 6 kegs Madder	2 anvils & Vice
2 boxes Northern Starch	1 bundle Brass Kettles
12 reams Wrapping Paper	5 bags Pepper
4 pair Patent Balances	4 do Allspice
2 boxes Cayenne Pepper	20 do Hoes
3 bundles Hoop Iron	5 kegs Powder

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The trading activity about Long's store was augmented when, on March 22, 1837, he received the appointment to open the first post office at the Landing, which he did in a portion of the store building. Mail was brought to the new office from Rossville by a special contractor at first, as the Landing was well off the stage coach route, which followed the Federal road from Ross's Gap in Missionary Ridge through the valley and across the foot of Lookout Mountain. Traffic between the ports of the eastern seaboard and the trading points farther in the interior passed over in increasing volume. Struggling teams and yokes of oxen hauled wagons, heavily loaded with all types of goods, over the rough mountain trails, while interspersed among them were stock drivers of all sorts on their way to market.

The river, which, because of its wild meanderings, led from or to none of the important sources of this traffic, was used little, consequently. It did, however, furnish a way for one important commodity to reach the area. Salt works had been established on the Holston River where the sacks were loaded on boats for the trip down the river. Consequently, Ross's Landing became a central distributing point for salt.

Most of the river trade in the period was carried by flat and keelboats. Although the first steamboat had made the hazardous voyage up the river in 1828, and about one new steamer each year was added to the river fleet, the irregularity of the water's depth and the difficult passage of several areas made their use limited. The flatboats were typical, homemade affairs, constructed and guided down the river by producers bringing their products to market. Keelboats were better built and were used for voyages both up and down the stream. Motive power against the current was furnished by the crew, either by poling or by towing from the bank, aided, when the wind was right and strong enough, by sails. Keelboats were owned frequently by organized companies, which established wharves and received goods for transport from any shipper.

This growing traffic gradually led to Ross's Landing becoming the most important river port between the dangerous Muscle Shoals and Knoxville. Together with the increase of activity which accompanied the preparation for the removal of the Indians, it attracted new people to the area. Among the newcomers in the summer of 1838 was a newspaperman, Ferdinand A. Parham, who had been editor of the *Mary-*

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*ville Intelligencer*. Leaving that paper in the care of a member of his family, he loaded a flatboat with type, press, and his household belongings, and made the trip down river to Ross's Landing. There, he tied his boat to the bank and went to work. He set up the press under a great oak tree, while the boat served as composing room and living quarters. Under such auspices and from such quarters, the first issue of the *Hamilton Gazette*, a weekly of Whig politics, appeared July 19, 1838.<sup>10</sup>

An article in the paper's second issue, that for July 26th, persuasively sets forth the advantages of the new community for prospective residents. First among them was the construction of the Western and Atlantic Railroad, which had been authorized two years earlier as a project of the state of Georgia. It would inevitably find its northern terminal at Chattanooga, the writer stated. Early comers would have preference in the location of property, which would be sold as quickly as the entry proceedings established by the Tennessee State Legislature could be completed in the coming November.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> No copy of this first issue has been uncovered by the search of the authors. So far as can be discovered, the single copy of the second issue, that of July 26th, in the possession of the Library of Congress, is the only extant copy of any issue for the first six years of the paper's existence. There is much interesting material in its columns, although it contains little immediately pertinent matter. It has a note about the negotiations which were proceeding between John Ross and General Scott over the manner of Removal, and another which gave notice of a stockholders' meeting of the Lookout Rail Road Company. One writer projected himself forty years into the future to report upon the community's appearance in 1875. The first page, strangely enough in the circumstances, contains a poem and an article, both probably reprints which express complete sympathy, although in general, not specific terms, with the Indians in their losing battle for their homelands. Another interesting feature is that, though the paper is dated as published at Ross's Landing, the majority of the references to the community in articles and advertisements call it Chattanooga.

<sup>11</sup> The act which set up the Ocoee district out of the newly acquired Cherokee lands and authorized their survey was passed October 18, 1836. It was followed by the act of November 20, 1837, which set up the details for the disposal of the lands. One section in each township was set aside "for the use of schools, in each township forever." All other areas were open for entry. The price was set at \$7.50 an acre, as compared to the minimum price of \$1.20 on Federal lands at the time. However, the Tennessee law provided for the progressive reduction of the price to 1c. an acre, if the land remained unsold for 25 months. Priority of entry was given to occupants for a period of 3 months. All prices covered the improvements which happened to be on the land entered. *Laws of Tennessee*, p. 436; *Acts Passed at the First Session of the 22nd General Assembly, 1837-38*, pp. 5-12.



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An office to receive land entries was opened in Cleveland on the first Monday in November. The residents at Ross's Landing had appointed commissioners to act for them in making the entries, as the law provided for multiple entry in that fashion. Inasmuch as the area fell into two subdivisions of the survey, one a full quarter-section, and the other a fractional quarter-section, the latter being created by the irregularity of the river's course, two sets of commissioners were appointed. John P. Long, Aaron M. Rawlings, and George W. Williams acted for the group resident on the full quarter-section, and Allen Kennedy, Albert S. Lenoir, and Reynolds A. Ramsey made the entry for the occupants of the fractional unit.<sup>12</sup>

A difficulty arose over the latter entry when four of the occupants attempted to enter individual claims to the area, even though they were included as participants in the general entry. The officials of the Ocoee Land Office, however, refused to accept the individual entries and granted the property in the name of the commissioners. One of the rejected group, Mrs. Jane Henderson, took the case to the courts for settlement.

Mrs. Henderson was the widow of Daniel Henderson, merchant and innkeeper, who had moved across the river and located near the landing on property, the occupancy rights to which had been mortgaged to him as early as 1832. He was killed, presumably by Indians, in the unrest which accompanied Removal sometime after taking up his new residence. His widow, however, continued to live on the property and to operate the inn after his death. Nevertheless, numer-

<sup>12</sup> The entry for the quarter section was registered November 7, 1838. The occupants were: Isaac Baldwin, George W. Cherry, Arsley Cope, Samuel H. Davis, William M. Davis, Thomas Edmondson, Joseph Ellis, Andrew Evans, Samuel Fitzgerald, Matthew Frazier, E. H. Freeman, Charles Grigsby, George B. Gwathmey, Berry Jones, John Keeny, Thomas W. Munsey, Abran Perry, Ezekiel Price, Joseph Rice, Eliza Russell, James Woods Smith, Wiley Starling, Rachel Webb, Samuel Williams, and Abner Witt, in addition to the three commissioners. The second entry, that for the fractional quarter-section was made December 12, 1838, delayed by the controversy which developed. The occupants were the three commissioners, John C. Cathey, S. M. Doak, William B. Gilliland, Nathan Harris, Jane Henderson, William Hill, Matthew Hillsman, Benjamin K. Hudgins, Cary A. Jones, M. W. Legg, William Long, John T. Mathis, Thomas Antipass Moore, David G. Perry, John A. Porter, William G. Sparks, William Thraillkill, William Thurman, James W. Tunnell, Jane White, Mathew Williams, and Darlen A. Wilds.



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ous newcomers set themselves up on the claim and were included among the group of entry-takers. It was to contest their claims that Mrs. Henderson instituted her suit, which was not settled for a decade. The final decision was something of a compromise, however, as all the claimants were allotted a share.<sup>13</sup>

The commissioners acted as the town's first city fathers. It was they who employed the engineer to survey the area into streets and lots. They secured the workman to clear the new streets and to dig whatever ditches were necessary to drain the boggy sections. They issued the deeds to the occupants for their homes or business buildings, and chose the lots which were to be reserved for future church congregations. After completing these functions, they were to advertise the sale at public auction of all the remaining property, and after the sale to divide the proceeds among the "parties in interest."

The limits of the community followed the section lines. The area extended from the river on the north to the present Ninth Street on the south, from Georgia Avenue on the east to the foot of Cameron Hill, the present Poplar Street, on the west. A pattern of nine streets running east-west and the same number from north to south was setup.

Among the lots set aside for community purposes was the one somewhere in the neighborhood of Fourth and Fifth streets, near Georgia Avenue, on which stood a log schoolhouse. Community services were held in it as well as school sessions, and it was also used for other public gatherings. Its dimensions display that such meetings must have had small crowds. It was, so one unknown writer has described it, "about 16 x 20 feet in size, made out of logs and chinked and daubed with mud. The seats were puncheon benches without backs,

<sup>13</sup> Armstrong, *History of Hamilton County and Chattanooga, Tennessee*, I, 127-132; McGuffey, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-25, quoting a speech by John P. Long. This information was checked with the Registrar's records in the office of the Title Guarantee and Trust Company, Chattanooga. Mrs. Henderson's claim included "her dwelling, and also the old ferry landing on the south bank of the Tennessee, where the mail carriers from Dallas to Rossville formerly crossed the said river, same now being the boat landing for the town of Chattanooga and also known as Ross's Landing." From this description in the court record, it is possible to determine accurately the location of the landing, slightly east of the present Market Street bridge in Chattanooga.

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the floor was the bottom of an old and abandoned flatboat, taken from the river, and the roof was made of split boards. Instead of a spire, there was at the north end of the building a stick and mud chimney. In this chimney a spice mortar was hung suspended, and the hour of public service was announced by striking the mortar with the pestle. Thus the pestle and mortar took the place of a church bell."<sup>14</sup>

One day during the summer of 1838 the sound of the "pestle and mortar" bell rang through the settlement. The call to public meeting had been expected by the people who eagerly made their way to the little log schoolhouse in the woods. Led by the six commissioners in a typical frontier town meeting, they took up the important question of a new name for the community. All were agreed that Ross's Landing hardly signified enough for the prospects in view. Yet when Lookout City, a typical American banality that would be ordinarily acceptable, was presented, the objection was voiced that "it was too pretentious; that a city in the woods never came to anything; that it was time to add the city when the town became worthy of it." Montevideo was also offered. Some held that it was appropriate because of the view of the mountains afforded by the community. The majority soon expressed disfavor; one said it was too farfetched; someone else pointed out that it was not American, and others said it was not local. This may have led to the suggestion by one man of the name Chattanooga. To support his position he affirmed, "it was homelike, it was local and was the name of a valley and creek in the neighborhood, and . . . was the original name of Lookout Mountain."

There was immediate objection from one of the participants in the discussion. He said that the word Chattanooga "was too uncommon, too uncouth; that strangers would miscall it, and remarked that a visitor from a distance a few days before, on ascending Missionary Ridge, when the magnificent view of the valley and the white cliffs of Walden's Ridge burst upon the view, [suggested] that Albion

<sup>14</sup> McGuffey, *op. cit.*, p. 224. The source of McGuffey's information is not given, although the supposition is that it was a contemporary. Other sources say that the building was constructed from logs placed vertically rather than the usual horizontal position. And the mortar and pestle are said to have been forged by a free Negro, William Lewis, who for the remainder of his life was one of the town's important blacksmiths.

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would be an appropriate name for the new town." Immediately an enthusiastic member of the group rose to his feet and said, "Oh, yes, let us call it that, Albun, that would be splendid." This immediate mispronunciation caused the rejection of Albion. Thoughts returned to Chattanooga, and one settler proposed a clinching argument. "The name might sound outlandish and strange to some ears, but if our city was a success, it would become familiar and pleasant, and there would not be another name like it in the world." The ayes carried, and the future city of the mountains was Chattanooga.<sup>15</sup>

The name was officially recognized when the Post Office Department changed the local office from Ross's Landing to Chattanooga on November 14, 1838. Publisher Parham followed and placed on the masthead of his paper the *Chattanooga Gazette* instead of the *Hamilton Gazette*. However, a few were reluctant to accept the aboriginal name and for a short time refrained from its use as a way of registering their protest.

The final step to make Chattanooga the official name of the community occurred December 20, 1839, when the General Assembly of Tennessee passed an "Act to establish the Town of Chattanooga in the County of Hamilton and to incorporate the inhabitants thereof." The act provided that the first election of town officers be held under the direction of the sheriff of the county on the second Thursday in January, 1840. Seven aldermen were to be chosen for one year. They were to select one of their number as mayor. By this method, James Berry was given the honor of being the first leader of the town of Chattanooga.

By the spring of 1839, the commissioners had completed all but one of their tasks. Only the sale of the lots, unclaimed by occupants or not set aside for public or church use, remained. This was advertised to take place April 20, 1839, and included only the area in the quarter-section, as the fractional quarter-section was involved in the litigation of the four counterclaimants. The surveyors had

<sup>15</sup> This scene is reconstructed from several writings by John P. Long, who is credited with having made the suggestion of Chattanooga, thus showing more discrimination in the choice of a place name than was usually true of Americans.



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divided the area into lots measuring 100 by 250 feet. When the auctioneer opened the bidding, the space nearest the river received the particular attention of prospective purchasers. Bidding for these lots was lively. The river was still the primary source of transportation and consequently the center of most business activity. As the day progressed and the lots farthest from the Tennessee were put up, bidding grew less spirited and prices declined.

Some of those who had occupant rights took advantage of the sale to enlarge their holdings. Equally interested were newcomers who had not been privileged to enter occupant claims. Others bought in anticipation of moving to Chattanooga, while still others sought property for purposes of investment or speculation. When the auctioneer accepted the bid on the final sale and a capitulation of the day's work was made, the total proceeds were found to be approximately \$45,000. After expenses of the sale were deducted, the remainder was divided by the commissioners, according to the agreement.<sup>16</sup>

By this time all the unclaimed lands in the Ocoee District were available for entry, as the occupant rights expired three months after the opening of the Entry Office. As the price for these areas were soon less than those then commanded by the lots within the limits of Chattanooga, claims to them were soon taken up, particularly for land close by the new community. Men with an eye for the future, such as John P. Long, made investments. Some of the soldiers, among them, William Lindsay, who made his entry in the name of his wife, entered an area adjacent to the fraction quarter-section, and gave his name to the street which runs through it. The greatest interest, however, came from two syndicates with outside capital dominating them. Samuel Williams was their local representative.

Williams had come to Hamilton County with his father and three brothers in the mid 1820's. The elder Williams had settled on an area of rich bottom land along the Tennessee near the foot of Walden's Ridge for his farm. There he and his sons lived until Sam crossed the river and started a store in the Cherokee country near the landing. His speculative interest was soon aroused by the opportunity afforded

<sup>16</sup> Parham, *op. cit.*, p. 5; McGuffey, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-46.



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by the Removal, and as early as 1837, he began negotiating with Zachariah B. Hargrove, a lawyer and banker of Georgia, who was already engaged in promotional activities in the onetime Cherokee area of his state. The plan was to organize a company to acquire lands at Ross's Landing and in the vicinity. Hargrove enlisted the interest of Dr. Tomlinson Fort of Milledgeville, Georgia. On February 5, 1838, an agreement was signed by Williams, acting for himself and his brother, George, and Hargrove, acting for Dr. Fort as well as himself, to form the Hargrove Company.<sup>17</sup>

Tomlinson Fort, who thus initiated the Fort family's association with Chattanooga before the town, itself, was organized, was one of the leading citizens of Georgia. His interests varied from surgery to banking to politics. He was active in the efforts to get the Indians removed, both as a private citizen and as a member of Congress. He was greatly interested in internal improvements and as early as 1825 had promoted a plan to connect the waters of the Savannah and the Tennessee by a canal or by the construction of a railroad between them. When, in 1836, the Georgia legislature took up a similar idea and authorized the building of the rail line between the Chattahoochee and the Tennessee, Dr. Fort was president of the state bank, the Central Bank of Georgia, at Milledgeville. His interest, built upon his knowledge of the area and its opportunities, joined with his position as a political leader and investor to make him the most important member of the partnership with Hargrove and the Williams brothers.

The first agreement was for the purchase of occupant claims from those who were residing within the nine blocks square of the new community. The Williams brothers had already acquired some claims, which became a part of the assets of the partnership, although the personal resident claims of the two brothers were not included. On August 3, 1838, the scope of the project was enlarged to include the purchase of lands anywhere within the Ocoee District. A new agreement was signed in which it was stated that all property acquired previously would become assets of the new company. The members

<sup>17</sup> *Chattanooga News*, August 24, 1907.

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of this group were Samuel Williams, Z. B. Hargrove, Tomlinson Fort, and a newcomer, Farish Carter.

Farish Carter was a wealthy planter who had large holdings of land near Milledgeville. When the Cherokee lands in Georgia were opened for settlement, he sent an agent into the area to buy up lottery claims near the Coosawatee and Conasauga rivers. The area caught his attention when he rode horseback through it prior to the Indian Removal. He secured a total of 15,000 acres, which were developed into a productive plantation. Here Carter spent the summer months. He continued to operate his estate near Milledgeville and had the reputation of being the largest slaveholder and the wealthiest man in the state of Georgia.<sup>18</sup>

Sometime shortly after this, a third organization was effected, whether to supplant the second or to act independently, available records do not make clear. According to a letter written to one of the Chattanooga newspapers many years later by Tomlinson Fort, the son of Dr. Fort, this group, known as the Hines Company, to distinguish it from the earlier Hargrove Company, was organized at Milledgeville. Williams, Fort, and Carter were joined by Richard K. Hines, John S. Thomas, and W. G. Lane in the new enterprise. Thomas and Hines were from Milledgeville. The latter soon passed from the company as he transferred his interest to Farish Carter. Lane was the son-in-law of Ker Boyce of Charleston, South Carolina, and the latter shortly assumed the Lane interest in the company.<sup>19</sup> Boyce was one of the wealthiest men in his state. As a merchant he had established numerous contacts with Georgia and Tennessee. He was an early advocate of internal improvements and took an important part in the planning and construction of the railroad which ran from Charleston to Hamburg, South Carolina. The enlistment of this South Carolina capitalist demonstrates the widening interest in the development at Chattanooga.

The syndicate was shortly joined by James A. Whiteside, who

<sup>18</sup> R. B. Flanders, *Plantation Slavery in Georgia*, pp. 119-121; Clark Howell, *History of Georgia*, IV, 28-31. Cartersville, Georgia, was named after Farish Carter.

<sup>19</sup> *Chattanooga News*, August 24, 1907.

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purchased "an undivided one-ninth" interest from Samuel and George Williams. Whiteside was a lawyer, about thirty-five years old, who was prominent in state politics, having represented his district in the state legislature since the late 1820's. He moved from Pikeville to Ross's Landing and immediately began to make investments in property and to promote business enterprises. He was aggressive in the interests of his new home and shortly held a position of importance among its leaders. He was an active exponent of railroads and manufacturing as well as a liberal supporter of all cultural institutions.

There was every reason for the members of the syndicate to feel their investment would bring them rich returns. Although the effects of the financial crisis of 1837 may have turned less optimistic men from such speculation, the position of Chattanooga as a primary gateway between the southeast and the west made them sure. The railroad to the area from the interior of Georgia was steadily progressing. This feeling was summed up in a letter written by Hargrove to Dr. Fort: "It is impossible for me to send you in detail a statement of our Tennessee speculators—not having one myself. I have a letter from the Messrs. Williams however in which they say that our investments will pay from one to three hundred per cent and much more should the Road terminate at the Landing. . . ." <sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Fort MSS. in possession of Chattanooga Public Library. Z. B. Hargrove to Dr. Tomlinson Fort, Dec. 31, 1838.





## CHAPTER VII

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### *River and Rail*

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By 1840 life in Chattanooga had settled to a routine of living. The scattered homesites, haphazardly selected by the early claimants, had been fitted into the conventional street pattern, but there was still plenty of room for gardens and outbuildings. The notes of the "melodious tin bugle" announcing the arrival of the stages on their way to and from Knoxville and Nashville broke the routine on scheduled days. Periodically, life came to full buzz around the hewn log warehouses which had been built by General Scott near the landing, when blasts from long horns hollowed out of cedar warned that upcountry rivermen would soon arrive on their flatboats and rafts to trade for needed supplies and to relax in conversation and merriment over a drink at one of the nearby stores.

When the "tide" was right, the deep "woo-whoo-whoo" of a river steamer might call from around the bend, and shortly with smoke pouring from its tall, noble stacks, the woodburning phenomenon of the day would ease upon shore, its crew busy with ropes and gang-plank in preparation for landing. As the unloading operations proceeded, the officers and passengers mingled with the townsmen, reciting their news of the outside world, or excitedly giving their report of the dangers encountered while crossing Petticoat Riffle or Jumping Moses Shoal, or while fighting the current through the Suck.

Little was left to remind one of the Indian days. The landing was still the center of trade for a good portion of Hamilton County. A total of 8,175 people resided in the county in 1840, including 584

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slaves and 93 free Negroes. Among the whites, the males outnumbered females by only a slight number, and most of them were young. Actually more than half of the total number were under twenty. Five "primary and common schools" had enrolled 133 of these as scholars. The breadwinners were mainly farmers; only 30 were engaged in commerce and 192 in manufacturing and the trades. An additional 40 were members of the "learned professions" or engineers.<sup>1</sup> In the Hard Cider campaign of 1840, the county gave the Whig candidate, William Henry Harrison, 606 votes, while his opponent, Martin Van Buren, received 473.<sup>2</sup>

The population in the southeastern corner of Tennessee did not develop rapidly after the first rush of settlers to take up the Indian lands. The rich river bottoms of the Cumberland and the fertile areas in the western part of the state were much more attractive to settlers than the thin soil, which was poor in mineral content, of the East Tennessee hills. Nashville dominated the commercial activities of the central part of the state, as the Cumberland River was a feasible route to the Ohio and the Mississippi, and even drew wagon trade from the valley of East Tennessee. Within the isolated valley region, Knoxville commanded a large part of the buying and selling. Wagon trains brought goods from the faraway seaports of Philadelphia and Baltimore, taking as much as two months to make the round trip. At Knoxville, some of the freight was transferred to boats and taken down the river as far as navigation would permit. Although Chattanooga got a part of its merchandise this way, it still maintained the contacts developed in the Indian period with Augusta, Charleston, and Savannah.

Stores were well stocked with goods. Advertisements in the *Gazette* for May 18, 1844, list a great variety: organdy, gingham, French cloths, silk, and cotton hosiery, black and white silk gloves, palm leaf, leghorn and fur hats, queensware, window glass, shoe leather, groceries and "garden seeds raised in Philadelphia." These were pur-

<sup>1</sup> *Sixth Census of the United States, Population Schedules, Hamilton County, Tennessee*. Vol. V. No differentiation is made between town and county in the census.

<sup>2</sup> Goodspeed Publishing Co., *History of Tennessee*, p. 815.

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chased "in the eastern cities" and were offered at the "very lowest terms for cash or such articles of produce as merchants usually buy." Among the latter were tallow, feathers, dry hides, beeswax, and bacon.

One of the merchants, though acknowledging his interest in trade goods, nevertheless included in his newspaper announcement that he would like to have "a clever share of cash." Hard money was scarce.

... and the "shinplasters" in circulation lacked the stability of the famous coon-skin currency of 1784-88. They would not "keep overnight," and the countryman from Powell's River or the north fork of the Holston, though rude of manner and uncouth of garb, had a large stock of "horse-sense," and all the shrewdness of his Scotch-Irish ancestors. He was altogether too "smart" to stuff his wallet or his wife's stocking with "irresponsible paper money." So it was a flitch of bacon for a pair of brogans, and a whole hog for five gallons of whiskey. This total lack of a circulation medium might be supposed to embarrass trade, and restrict it to very narrow limits. But it did not, for the "trading animal" can accommodate himself to almost any circumstances. The business of Chattanooga grew to large dimensions. The spring and fall freshets which rendered navigable streams that in midsummer may be crossed without wetting one's feet, brought down such fleets of flatboats from the "up-country" that they were often crowded together along the entire river frontage. In these boats the countryman brought to market his surplus produce, and took back his year's supply of tea, coffee, salt, whiskey, wearing apparel, and "fancy fixin's" for the goddess of his household. The prices exacted of him were high; but what was that to him, so long as he manufactured his own currency? Like the bank officials of "wildcat" times, who issued their notes so long as they could find strength to affix their signatures, his exchequer could not be exhausted while he could use his right hand in creating a surplus.<sup>3</sup>

This vivid description was somewhat overdrawn as far as the growth of Chattanooga trade was involved. It is true, however, that Chattanoogans in the period of 1840 were receiving encouragement

<sup>3</sup> J. R. Gilmore (Edmund Kirke, *pseud.*) "The Southern Gateway of the Alleghanies," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, LXXIV, (April, 1887), 666. Kirke visited Chattanooga and secured his information by conversations with early settlers.

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from many sources. Trade from the surrounding area was increasing somewhat. If the value of the imported products was high and that of the produce of the countrymen low, and both were, it was due to the difficulties of transport. In fact, the merchants were caught in the same circumstances as the producers, as they saw when they totaled their costs after reaching the markets. Freight charges ate too deeply into their profits; nor were the methods of transportation always safe and dependable.

The need for facilities to carry goods cheaply and surely had been too long recognized in East Tennessee. In its narrow valleys, corn, swine, grain, and other country products were raised in large quantities. But the river, which at first glance would appear to be a proper source of transport, unfortunately, did not run straight to the sea. Furthermore, the turbulent mountain section below Chattanooga sealed off the upper river to prevent its use for purposes of extensive trade, and the Muscle Shoals was a second river block to any who ventured through the Tumbling Shoals, the Suck, and Boiling Pot with success. The tortuous and treacherous river needed to be improved or another way to break out of the valley had to be found, however difficult its construction might be. To most residents of the valley, the latter appeared to be the better solution, for, if properly selected, it would bring them more direct routes to the Cotton South, which was the big deficiency area for the very products which they had to market.

As early as the last decade of the eighteenth century, it was realized that one possibility lay in the use of tributaries of the Tennessee and Coosa rivers, then by the Alabama to the Gulf at Mobile. However, a large and vital part of this route was in Cherokee and Creek territory, and the Indians were not receptive to the idea of its development. Numerous memorials pleading for action in their relief, were drawn up by East Tennesseans and addressed to state and national officials. One, which was sent to President Madison in 1810, stated the case with vigor: "Unless we can obtain a shorter and more convenient means by which to convey our produce to market, we shall be compelled either to raise no more of any article than we can consume ourselves, or if we should, have it waste on our hands, and in either



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case our eventual situation may well be conceived." It was hoped that Madison would make a demand upon the Indians "in a language that cannot be misunderstood."<sup>4</sup>

An equally disturbing factor in the early period was that the port of Mobile, where the route would terminate, was still under the Spanish flag. But after the Floridas came into the possession of the United States and internal improvements became a dominant interest, attention was again focused on this route. This was given impetus in 1820 by such dramatic voyages as that of the *Tennessee Patriot*, an appropriately named keelboat. Freightened with whisky and flour, the fifty-foot long craft, with a beam of six feet and hull of the same depth, was poled up the winding Hiwassee and the rapid Ocoee to a place where further navigation was impossible. After being carted over the portage of eleven miles on a huge wagon, drawn by yokes of oxen, the boat was placed upon the narrow Conasauga, whence it floated downstream over the waters of the Oostanaula, the Coosa, and the Alabama.

There was use of the route by other keelboats. A boat yard was maintained at each end of the portage, with wagons and oxen to perform the task of hauling. Between 1821 and 1830, there were repeated efforts to promote the construction of a canal to connect the two river systems, and at least one to build a railroad between them. The "Coosa craze" possibly reached its height in 1826, when Tennessee chartered the Hiwassee Canal Company. However, the Cherokees refused to grant the right to use their territory, and the project was not attempted, although surveys by engineers of the Federal Government were made, Alabama gave some support to the plan, but Georgia does not appear to have been interested in the route, which merely passed through its streams. Its interest was naturally in a connection between the Tennessee and its own trading towns and seaports. This, as was pointed out by Wilson Lumpkin, should reach the Tennessee through the valleys leading to the Look-out Mountain area.

<sup>4</sup> H. H. Gauding, *Water Transportation in East Tennessee Prior to the Civil War* (unpublished master's thesis, University of Tennessee), p. 64. This thesis and many other secondary works contain information about the "Coosa Craze," as this movement was popularly called.

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Many, however, still clung to the idea that the Tennessee River offered the most practicable route out of the valley. But its use required that the natural obstacles of the mountain section and Muscle Shoals should be overcome. Such a program would be expensive. Moreover, Tennessee, which had no Federal lands, had not specific income for such purposes. Then, too, the state was torn by sectional differences, and the middle portion would not receive direct benefits from the improvement of the Tennessee, as would the eastern and western sections. Another handicap was created by the fact that Muscle Shoals lay within the borders of Alabama. Consequently, those interested turned to the Federal Government.

Some of the authorities at Washington were fearful of establishing any precedent for the invasion of the rights of the states. John C. Calhoun, then Secretary of War, stated that the improvement of Muscle Shoals was, however, of national importance,<sup>5</sup> and Congress in 1827 appropriated the sum of two hundred dollars for a survey. This was the first Federal money to be spent on the Tennessee. But to accomplish the purpose, which was the building of a canal around the shoals, the Government felt obliged to use indirect methods. Four hundred thousand acres of Federal lands were given to Alabama, and the proceeds of their sale were to be used to construct the canal.

Before work could be started on the project, an event of major importance to the river occurred. The steamboat *Atlas* completed the trip from Paducah over the Muscle Shoals, through the obstacles below Ross's Landing, and arrived at Knoxville March 3, 1828. The people of the latter city had been talking steamboats for some years, and in the hope of attracting boatmen to attempt the voyage to the Upper Tennessee had offered a purse for the first to arrive at the town's river front. Twenty years after Fulton's *Clermont* made its maiden run, Captain S. D. Connor nosed his small sidewheeler up the Tennessee. The bad sections of the river proved to be less difficult and time consuming, due to the assistance of the high spring tide which lifted the flat-bottomed *Atlas* over the hidden rocks and shoals, than the need to secure fuel. Frequent stops were necessary and all

<sup>5</sup> *Reports and Public Letters of John C. Calhoun*, V, pp. 137-147.

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hands, armed with axes, took to the forest to chop wood for the enormous appetite of the engines.

The trip was actually uneventful for the crew, although they enjoyed the spontaneous interest and amusing antics of the valley residents, who were awe-struck by the vessel. It had no whistle, but used a cannon, which was fired occasionally as a warning of its approach. "She made a heap of fuss puffin' and blowin' and all the mountaineers thought she was some sort of live thing come up from the Gulf." Some were so sure of it that they armed themselves "with the old blunderbuss flintlocks and proposed to kill the critter." When it stopped at such places as Ross's Landing, people flocked to the banks to see the new phenomenon, and some of the more courageous ventured aboard for a closer inspection.<sup>6</sup>

Knoxville celebrated the arrival of the *Atlas*, and promptly paid the \$640 prize money to Captain Conner. Preparations were initiated to launch regular steamboat service on the river, and renewed efforts were made to secure an appropriation from the state for river improvement. At its session of 1829-30, the legislature inspired by what had occurred, set up a board of internal improvements and allotted \$150,000 for its use. Sixty thousand dollars of the amount was to be spent in the eastern section of the state, but the difficulty of securing a competent engineer delayed the work. In October, 1831, a survey of the obstructions in the mountain section was reported to the board and an estimate made that \$20,000 would be needed to create a usable channel.

Because of the insistence of East Tennesseans that their problems required more particular attention than could be given them by the state board, the Board of Internal Improvements for East Tennessee was set up in 1831. It immediately borrowed the services of Major Stephen H. Long from the army. Major Long was an engineer of great experience. He had surveyed many areas of the country and was by this time recognized as an authority on river transport matters. He recommended that the channel of the river be deepened to twenty-four inches at low water and that facilities for warping be

<sup>6</sup> T. J. Campbell, *The Upper Tennessee*, pp. 9-15; *The Daily Chattanooga*, Jan. 27, 1909. Interview with Capt. L. M. Wester.



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provided in areas where the current was exceptionally swift. His plan was adopted and work was started below Ross's Landing. The improvements of this section were completed by December, 1833, and then attention was turned to the remainder of the river as far north as Knoxville.<sup>7</sup>

These efforts made it possible to use the river from Decatur to Knoxville for approximately seven months out of the year, although the area in the mountains below Ross's Landing was still rough and treacherous. The great Muscle Shoals still stood, moreover, as a barrier against the voyage to the lower river and the sea. The canal built by Alabama had not realized expectations, since at low water it was almost useless. Even before it was completed the possibility of its failure had resulted in the construction of a railroad from Tusculumbia to Decatur to perform the service of avoiding the shoals. This Tusculumbia Railway was the first to be built west of the Appalachian Mountains. It was opened in January, 1835, first with horses for motor power. Though it was of assistance in conveying goods and passengers around the obstruction, its small locomotive, which took the place of the horses, and cars afforded limited use. Furthermore, the transfer of freight from craft to car and back again was expensive. All combined to prevent the development on the Tennessee of a large water traffic. Even so, the number of steamers increased slightly, although exact numbers are difficult to ascertain, as names were often changed when new owners took possession of the boats or they were remodeled.<sup>8</sup>

Chattanooga naturally participated in the river trade. However, the height of the water was a constant source of difficulty, as shown by a note in the *Chattanooga Gazette* for May 18, 1844. The *Joshua Shipley* was at the wharf. The *Frankland* was above, and the *Huntsman* below town. All were waiting for a "tide" on which to run. Never-

<sup>7</sup> Folmsbee, *op. cit.*, pp. 78-82.

<sup>8</sup> Tennessee Valley Authority, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-63; Campbell, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-45; *The Chattanooga Times*, May 6, 1881. The article in the *Chattanooga Times* gives interesting detail which was furnished by Captain George Nicholson for the *Kingston East Tennessean*, about the early steamboats that came over the Muscle Shoals before 1856.



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theless, the same paper contains an advertisement that the *Huntsman* was running as a regular packet from Decatur "up river."<sup>9</sup>

Despite this important new competition, keelboat men still tried to maintain their business, and flatboats continued to make the downstream voyages from far up the numerous small tributaries of the river. When the spring freshets filled the streams, typical log rafts, with huts for the crew and sweeps at either end for steering, were frequently in sight. "Often the rafts, one following another, would extend along the stream for miles, looking, to the unfamiliar eye, as they wound their devious way down the winding river, like a company of 'great American sea-serpents' out for a holiday excursion."<sup>10</sup>

Some cold water was thrown on the enthusiasm for the use of the river when the *Atlas* at Knoxville arrived in 1828. Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey, whose *Annals of Tennessee* is authoritative for the early history of the state, was selected to address the crowd which gathered. He took the occasion to point out that East Tennessee had to look to some overland route to Charleston and Savannah to achieve its destiny. Shortly after, the railroad fever, which was spreading rapidly in the east, leaped into the area. An "association of Gentlemen" in little Rogersville expressed the extent of this interest in their biweekly newspaper, the *Rail-Road Advocate*, which was published from July 4, 1831, to June 14, 1832, and had the distinction of being the first such journal in the country.<sup>11</sup>

With all their interest, the East Tennesseans did not have the financial strength to undertake such an expensive project as a railroad to the coast. They were not backward, however, in their effort to enlist outside support, and in Charleston they found many who were equally interested. Charleston had suffered from the western migration of cotton, which had contributed to the city's failure to recover from the Panic of 1819. "Charleston has for several years past retro-

<sup>9</sup> In addition, the owners of the *Huntsman* offered to ship freight from New Orleans to Chattanooga including railroad charges at Muscle Shoals for \$1.12½ a hundred pounds. From Decatur the charge was 37½ cents with a minimum charge for less than 800 pounds of \$3.00. Cabin passage from Decatur to Chattanooga cost \$5.00 while those who took deck passage paid but half that amount.

<sup>10</sup> Gilmore, *op. cit.*, p. 667.

<sup>11</sup> Folmsbee, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-89.

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graded with a rapidity unprecedented. Her landed estate has within eight years depreciated one-half. Industry and business talent driven by necessity has sought employment elsewhere. Many of her houses are tenantless and the grass grows uninterrupted in some of her chief business streets. This may be a melancholy picture, but is nevertheless true." This editorial comment from the *Charleston Courier* of March 13, 1828, displays the sad state of affairs at the time in the metropolis of South Carolina. Savannah, Mobile, and New Orleans seemed to be prospering at Charleston's expense. Charleston leaders, demonstrating that their courage and initiative had not been lost, moved to retrieve the community's position by promoting internal improvements to tap the trade of the hinterland. Partly to accommodate planters within South Carolina but principally to win the trade of Augusta, Georgia, a focus point for the commerce of the interior, a charter was obtained for the South Carolina Canal and Railroad Company in 1828.

Deciding to throw in their fate with the new railroad idea, the promoters planned to construct a line from their city to Hamburg, South Carolina, at the fall line of the Savannah River and just across the stream from Augusta. At the western terminal they hoped to divert to their own port the trade of the interior, which had been going to Savannah by way of the river from Augusta. Like the merchants of Boston, Philadelphia, New York, and Baltimore, the insistent purpose of the Charlestonians was to reach for western trade. The 136 miles of track were opened for traffic in 1833. The Charleston and Hamburg had the distinction of being the longest railroad in the world at the time.<sup>12</sup>

With this railroad completed to its borders, Georgia immediately took inventory of its position and of the importance of constructing roads to tie in with this route to the coast. Savannah was alarmed over Charleston's bold move to capture the trade of the interior and began pressing for a railroad. All this led to the chartering of three

<sup>12</sup> The material for the development of the network of railroads which gathered about Chattanooga has been secured from numerous sources, both primary and secondary. Good accounts can be found in Johnston, *op. cit.*, and U. B. Phillips, *The History of Transportation in the Eastern Cotton Belt to 1860*.

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railroads by the Georgia legislature in December, 1833: The Central Railroad and Banking Company of Georgia was to build from Savannah to Macon; the Georgia Railroad and Banking Company, from Augusta to Athens; and the Monroe Railroad Company was to tie in with the road from Savannah at Macon and to extend northward.

These projects were of intense interest to the residents of East Tennessee. Both South Carolina and Georgia had been in the academic stage of planning railroads to the Tennessee Valley for some years. A convention met in Knoxville as early as 1831 to discuss a transmontane project. Representatives of Charleston were present and were promised "strenuous co-operation" by the East Tennesseans. The Georgians countered by the inclusion in the charter of the Georgia Railroad the discretionary power to extend its line from Athens to the Tennessee River. However, action lagged behind the indications of interest, which included suggestions of a great variety of routes, among them plans to reach the Mississippi at Memphis. When the Hiwassee Railroad Company was chartered by the state of Tennessee in January, 1836, it was planned to be built directly south from Knoxville to tie into one of the Memphis routes.

The stock subscription books of the Hiwassee were opened on the same day that a big railroad convention met at Knoxville in July, 1836, with about 400 representatives from nine states present. With Robert Y. Hayne, former governor and senator from South Carolina, in the chair, proposals were offered for the construction of the Louisville, Cincinnati and Charleston Railroad, which was projected to cross northeastern Tennessee. Objection to these suggestions of the South Carolinians was immediately voiced by Georgians, whose roads would be by-passed by the new effort, if it were successful.

Upon returning home, the Georgians immediately began work on ideas of their own. They called a convention to meet at Macon in November. When it convened a Committee of Forty was appointed to bring in recommendations. These followed closely the suggestions made in the report of 1826 by Lumpkin and Fulton. The Tennessee River offered the best opportunity to reach the Mississippi and the west, the committee said. Nowhere south of New York was the geography so favorable for penetrating the lands behind the moun-



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tains. For the first time attention began to center upon Ross's Landing in railroad construction plans, when the Committee of Forty specifically singled it out: "Ross's Landing or some neighboring point on the Tennessee River, just above the commencement of the passage of the river through the Cumberland Mountains, is thought to be the most eligible place for the proposed railroad to strike the Tennessee River."<sup>13</sup>

The convention approved the report of the committee and recommended that the legislature of the state adopt the plan suggested in it. On December 21, 1836, the legislature passed a resolution authorizing the construction of the Western and Atlantic Railroad of the State of Georgia, the expense to be borne by the state. At the same session, the governor was directed to learn if Tennessee would permit an extension of the road to some place "at or near Rossville."<sup>14</sup> Major Long, who had worked on the Tennessee just a few years before, was secured from the War Department in May, 1837, to make a reconnaissance for a feasible route for the location of the right of way between the Chattahoochee River and the Tennessee State line.

Long's recommendations were glowing. He saw many advantages along the route, but he felt them slide into insignificance when contrasted with the "magnificent relationships," which the contemplated connection of the South and Northwest would bring. Mounting to a peak of enthusiasm, he wrote: "With such an enterprise and the means of its accomplishment in hand, and with such prospects inviting to its vigorous prosecution in view,—what destinies are too mighty and what magnificence too exalted, for the anticipations of Georgia."<sup>15</sup>

Despite the fact that Ross's Landing had been mentioned as a possible terminal, other communities began to press their own desires for such honor. The promoters of the Hiwassee railroad had hopes, and felt they had promises that the northern end of the W & A. would tie in with their road. It became necessary, consequently, for the few white residents of the little community at Ross's Landing to take

<sup>13</sup> *Southern Recorder*, Milledgeville, Georgia, November 15, 1836.

<sup>14</sup> Johnston, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.



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some aggressive action. William Smith, A. M. Rawlings, Allen Kennedy, and John P. Long accordingly wrote to Governor William Schley of the state of Georgia, requesting that he visit Ross's Landing. They expressed their worry over the competition which had developed for the northern terminus of the road, and asked his advice in the matter.

The governor's reply was dated July 20, 1837. He not only indicated his own interest in the project but to a degree set their minds at ease. He wrote:

Your esteemed favor the 22nd ult came to hand just as I was on the eve of departing for the Chattahoochee to see and converse with Colonel Long and the gentlemen associated with him in the surveys of experimental lines preparatory to the location of the great "Western & Atlantic Railroad." My time was so limited that I could not visit Rossville then, but during the month of August next, I shall endeavor to travel along the line of the surveys and extend my journey as far as Rossville, or at least to Lafayette. I regret that, even before the surveys commenced, jealousies have arisen in the minds of the people of both States in regard to the location of the road. The law is the guide of Colonel Long and myself, and if the nature and face of the country be such as to permit the road to start from Rossville, it will assuredly do so, and if not then from the nearest practicable point on the line east of that place. Thorough examinations with the best instruments, will be made of the country, before any decision will be made as to the final location of the road.

I thank you for the invitation to visit Ross's Landing, and the tender of your hospitality, both of which will give me pleasure to accept, if I can do so consistently with the discharge of my public duty.<sup>16</sup>

Despite Governor Schley's promise to follow the act, there was the loophole in his statement that the engineers might find the terrain impracticable. The residents of Ross's Landing consequently took time by the forelock. John P. Long, George Williams, and A. M. Rawlings sought the support of other communities of East Tennessee, and petitioned the legislature for authority to construct a railroad from Ross's Landing to unite the W. & A., wherever it might reach the

<sup>16</sup> State of Georgia: *Governor's Letter Book, 1835-1840*, pp. 191-192.

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state line. On October 30, 1837, the Lookout Railroad Company was chartered for this purpose.<sup>17</sup>

The Georgia legislature accepted Long's report in December, 1837, and at the same session designated the southern terminal of the road to be within a radius of eight miles from a point on the southeastern bank of the Chattahoochee, "as shall be most eligible for the running of branch roads, thence to Athens, Madison, Milledgeville, Forsyth and Columbus." Here the great network of the Georgia system would be knotted. The junction site was named Terminus. In December, 1845, after a short interval when it was known as Marthasville, the community was named Atlanta.

A representative of Georgia was sent to Nashville to negotiate with Tennessee for authority to continue the W. & A. from the state line to the Tennessee River. On January, 28, 1838, he reported his "long, tedious, and perplexing mission" had been accomplished. He had encountered considerable opposition, particularly from friends of the Hiwassee Railroad. "Every device to which ingenuity could resort was in exercise for many days to defeat the bill," he reported to the governor. However, "just and liberal views prevailed," although the House narrowly passed the bill. He said that Governor Cannon of Tennessee deserved "the thanks of the people of Georgia" for his assistance.<sup>18</sup>

Work was started on the construction of the railroad in March, 1838, at its southern end. The northern terminus was not fixed, however, for another year. The Georgia legislature at its meeting in December, 1838, directed the engineers to choose the most practicable spot and to submit it to the governor for approval. On February 25, 1839, the *Hiwassee Patriot* announced to its readers that Chattanooga had been chosen. This was officially confirmed when Governor

<sup>17</sup> State of Tennessee: *Acts passed at the First Session of the 22nd General Assembly, 1837-1838*, pp. 44-48.

<sup>18</sup> State of Tennessee: *Acts passed at the First Session of the 22nd General Assembly, 1837-1838*, pp. 319-320.

State of Georgia, *Railroads: Western and Atlantic Reports*: Letter from Daniel Newman to Governor George R. Gilmer, Jan., 28, 1838.

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Gilmer stated it in his message to the General Assembly, November 5, 1839.<sup>19</sup>

The final location of the line within Chattanooga was not fixed until 1840. Twenty acres were secured at the southern limits for terminals. However, a right of way to the river was necessary, and on July 21, 1840, an agreement with the town authorities was reached, giving the state of Georgia the use of Mulberry Avenue, which was rechristened Railroad Avenue, for its tracks.

When the Georgia officials named Chattanooga the northern terminal of the Western and Atlantic, they made the most important decision of the town's history. It was not by chance that the site was selected. Geography dictated their choice, as it had also fixed the southern end. Had topographic advantages, however, been subordinated to other factors, Chattanooga and Atlanta would have possibly remained for years but way stations on a connecting line. But as terminals, they soon became as magnets, drawing to them a network of other railroad projects. Thus the two communities came to dominate transportation in the southeast.

The early efforts at planning the W. & A. had been advanced by the boom psychology of the middle thirties. The effects of the Panic of 1837 were not felt until after construction had started. Even then, because of a dearth of opportunities, most of the contractors were disposed to finish their sections and some were willing to take on additional work. But the continued financial strain soon caused such a severe decline in the market rate of the scrip issues, which were used to finance the project, that the state ordered all work suspended in 1842. All the other lines had already suspended construction, and the problem of bringing the rails for ironing the W. & A. would have made completion most difficult, had the work continued.

During the next few years, construction was spasmodically carried on. There was contention about the practicability and the necessity

<sup>19</sup> Although speculation in lands at Chattanooga had been made in the anticipation of the location of the railroad, the Georgia legislature attempted to control similar activities by those in an official capacity. In the act of 1838, an inquiry was authorized to ascertain if any of the engineers who were engaged in the survey, had purchased lands in Tennessee before the route was established. If there were any, they were to be immediately discharged.



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for the road as well as the problems of financing its construction. Opposition to internal improvements still existed, as expressed by one who claimed God never intended man to dig away the hills and level the valleys so that "snorting creatures" could move with ease through His green pastures. One community, staid and content in its isolation, even refused permission for the road to pass through its limits. Chattanoogaans frequently felt a dread in this period that either the road would never be finished or some vested interest might yet turn it aside to other parts. Allen Kennedy confided his fears in a letter to a friend. "If Georgia fails to finish the road," he wrote, "or make the appropriation for its completion all is flat in Chattanooga, but the general belief is that she will do it. And then we expect a rush to this place. I am not sanguine about the result, for it seems we have had so many disappointments about the matter that I hardly expect much at least from the road, for as soon as one difficulty is done with, another is ready for poor Chattanooga."<sup>20</sup>

Some of Kennedy's Chattanooga neighbors resolved upon a course of action to demonstrate the local willingness to co-operate and to prove that the Tennessee River was practicable for navigation. A meeting was held to discuss plans and B. Rush Montgomery again asserted the possibilities of the place. W. L. Dugger undertook the role of Paul Bunyan. With a yoke of oxen and a plow he spent his spare time for two years, according to his own account, trying to clear the river. Other prominent men of the town joined together and bought the little steamer *Caney Fork*. She steamed up the river from Muscle Shoals and upon reaching Chattanooga was rechristened the *Sam Martin*. She was equipped with a workboat and a more extensive attempt to improve the river in the area was undertaken with their aid. Some of the same men and other associates resurrected the old Lookout Railroad Company and had its charter amended so it could be constructed to meet the W. & A., whether the latter were built to other points or failed to be completed as originally planned. James A. Whiteside and others were dispatched to Milledgeville to

<sup>20</sup> *Chattanooga News*, April 9, 1930, quotes letter from Allen Kennedy to A. S. Lenoir, November 29, 1847.



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state again the merits of Chattanooga as the northern terminal of the W. & A.<sup>21</sup>

But more assistance came from a new source. Nashville's interest had been awakened in railroads, particularly when Memphis began to make new plans for a connection with the Atlantic Seaboard. A. O. P. Nicholson, editor of the *Nashville Union*, launched a newspaper campaign in the interest of a Nashville to Chattanooga railroad early in 1845. He was immediately supported by prominent citizens. Attention was called to the importance of the southern markets, to the coal fields along the way to Chattanooga, and to the fact that Dr. Gerald Troost, state geologist, had found a feasible right of way. The question became a political issue in the state senatorial race and was consequently well advertised.

In order to strengthen their case, the advocates of the Nashville and Chattanooga made inquiry of Governor Crawford of Georgia about his state's intentions. In September, 1845, he promised that the W. & A. would be completed to Chattanooga as promptly as possible.<sup>22</sup> South Carolina was visited by the promoters of the N. & C. to secure support from Charleston. The culmination of the activity was the introduction of a bill by James A. Whiteside, then a member of the House of Representatives from Hamilton County, for the incorporation of a company to construct and operate the road. The charter for the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad Company was granted December 11, 1845.

Memphis, river mart and distribution center, had been encouraged to reach out for an eastern tie by Calhoun and his South Carolina colleagues as early as 1831. Some short lines were subsequently constructed, and paper plans drawn for weaving them into a larger system. With new encouragement, from Georgia and South Carolina, agitation again blossomed in the Commercial Convention of 1845, held in Memphis. As a consequence of the interest generated at this

<sup>21</sup> McGuffey, *op. cit.*, pp. 194-196, Dugger scrapbook, undated newspaper clipping; State of Tennessee: *First Acts Passed at the Session of the 26th General Assembly, 1845-1846*, pp. 175-176.

<sup>22</sup> T. D. Clark, "Development of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, Series 2, III, p. 163.

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meeting, a charter for the Memphis and Charleston Railroad was granted February 2, 1846, by the state of Tennessee. It was to be built from Memphis to a point on the southern border of the state where connection would be possible with the roads leading to Charleston.

In addition to the impetus given the W. & A. by these new projects, encouragement was also found in the south. In 1845 and 1846, the roads from Augusta and Savannah reached Atlanta. The completion of the state road, as the important connecting link in the growing network of railroads, thus became a matter of pressing necessity. So, in 1847, Georgia provided funds for the construction of the last section, from Dalton to Chattanooga.

Just north of Dalton, a formidable ridge necessitated a tunnel. It was decided to lay track on the sections north and south of this spot before the tunnel was completed. A locomotive and cars were brought from Atlanta, loaded on wagons and taken over the ridge by oxen. This engine, "a little thing, with ball drivers, no flanges and carrying the water tank on top of the boilers," pulled the first train into Chattanooga December 1, 1849. It was a celebration train and carried passengers, who came from localities served by the road.

[Upon arrival] they were formed in procession, with a portion of the citizens of [Chattanooga]. . . . The meeting was held in a boat at the wharf of the Tennessee, and the ceremonies observed consisted of a Prayer, by Rev. Dr. Talmadge; an address by Col. Whiteside, welcoming the people of Georgia to Tennessee; and a reply by Maj. M. A. Cooper, which concluded with the following sentiment.

"The State of Tennessee—a co-operator in the grand event we commemorate, she has acted well her part. With united hands, let Georgia and Tennessee join on this occasion in mingling the waters of the Atlantic and the Mississippi, here brought together by the Chief Engineer, as the organ of our State. With uplifted hands, let these States hail the valley of the Mississippi, whilst Tennessee, with a noble and patriotic enterprise, shall open the way for us to the far West by Nashville and shall establish a communication with the North through the valley of the Holston."

And finally, Colonel Mitchell, the Chief Engineer, mingled the waters of the Atlantic and the Tennessee, emptying the bottle of water sent him by Col. Gadsden from Charleston, and a bottle of Georgia water, simul-

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taneously in the running stream, in token of the union and fraternity of three states.<sup>23</sup>

The river trade of the Upper Tennessee began to be diverted southward at Chattanooga over the railroad. Goods and passengers were transferred at Tunnel Hill to vehicles drawn by horses or oxen and then placed again upon the cars to complete the journey. However, this shuttle service was always hard-pressed and at times totally unable to keep up with the amount of freight received.<sup>24</sup>

On October 31, 1849, the "headings of the tunnel were driven through." The excitement was so great among the bosses and workers "that nothing could control it, and the feeling to celebrate this peaceful victory over nature's obstacles in some befitting manner was universal." A celebration was held the next day. Numerous bottles of wine were used to christen the tunnel, which was brilliantly lighted from end to end. As a final touch, water from the River Jordan, "a small bottle of which had been presented by the Reverend John Jones, of Marietta, from the Reverend Mr. Lanneau, late missionary to Jerusalem, and presented to the chief engineer was, after being handed around the crowd for the inspection of the curious, poured out by him in honor of the occasion."

That evening, distinguished visitors arrived from many localities of the southeast to celebrate in a manner typical of the day a welding of the upper South with the cotton belt. A contemporary newspaper carried a full story of the proceedings:

A cannon sent up from the Iron Works in Cass County by Hon. Mark A. Cooper was planted upon the summit of the mountain under the direction of Capt. Wm. D. Fulton, late of the Army in Mexico, and seven salutes were fired.

The company then assembled in the East end of the tunnel and formed a procession as before, accompanied by a band of Sable musicians, who belonged on the work and seemed to have sprung up spontaneously for

<sup>23</sup> *Charleston Daily Courier*, December 8, 1849, quotes the *Marietta Advocate*, no date.

<sup>24</sup> *The Charleston Mercury*, May 3, 1850, quotes the *Ringgold Republican*, date not given: "The business on the road for the last two months, has been very heavy, large cargoes of freight being daily transported to and from Chattanooga."

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the purpose, and after arriving at the West end bottles of wine were broken by Judge King and Mr. Grant and the water from the Jordan passed around for inspection and a portion of it poured out as before. Hon. Mark A. Cooper being called upon, gave the following sentiment: "The Western and Atlantic Railroad; the first connection of the Atlantic and the Mississippi—the chain is now complete. This quiet opening of its grand tunnel is emblematic of its peaceful end. The roar of Georgia's native cannon over our mountain top indicates that in time of peace we are prepared for war."

Hon. John P. King, being called for a sentiment gave: "While others have been commended for doing the speaking and writing, let us wish prosperity and happiness to the men who have done the work." Thus the hour of midnight closed this very interesting celebration of the opening of the tunnel which it is gratified to know introduces us into the great valley of the Mississippi.<sup>25</sup>

As a final gesture, the cannon, which had so signally participated in the triumph of victory over the hills from which its metal had come, was loaded to its muzzle and touched off. It was destroyed by the explosion, as had been planned, inasmuch as it was thought that no other occasion would be great or serious enough for its future use.

On May 9, 1850, the tunnel track was sufficiently finished to permit the first train to pass and the entire 137 miles of the railroad was put into uninterrupted service.<sup>26</sup> A critical traveler, who journeyed over the road that summer to Chattanooga wrote that traffic had been "immense," but that it would have been much greater had it not been for the "miserable and disgraceful equipment; not possessing a single comfortable or airy car as far as I have seen." The coaches were "about as elastic and delightful as an ox-cart," and it was "neither pleasant nor right, that a man should pay his money for accommoda-

<sup>25</sup> Johnston, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-42. Quotes from the *Milledgeville Federal Union*. No date.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39. There is much confusion about the date of the completion of the W. & A. Some accounts use the 1849 date for the beginning of uninterrupted service, while other secondary sources use 1851 for unexplained reasons. Johnston, however, quotes from the report of the Chief Engineer for the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, 1850, which specifically stated that May 9 of that year was the correct date. This is also confirmed by the *Dalton Times* of May 9, as quoted in the *Southern Recorder* of Milledgeville of May 14, 1850.



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tions he does not receive—to be compelled to stand on the platforms in front or rear—sit on the steps outside exposed to sun and cinders—or hold on the back of seats, dangling like a pendulum from side to side.” Nor was this observer pleased with the route, for he thought river navigation below Chattanooga was too treacherous for use as a feeder for the railroad, and he maintained that the location of the road was influenced “by persons whose disinterestedness seems to be questionable.”<sup>27</sup>

At this time the tracks was a “patchwork of strap rails and flange rails laid on wooden stringers, and ‘bridge rails’ of the shape of an inverted U, spiked directly to the cross-ties.”<sup>28</sup> Undoubtedly the traveler in 1850 also noted another feature of the road, which was responsible for the “dangling” to which he objected. Between Atlanta and Chattanooga the route was filled with curves; they actually totaled more than thirty complete circles or over 10,000 degrees of curvature. This fact brought complaint from the management as well as passengers. An early superintendent claimed that the road could have been better located even without the employment of professional engineers. “With a common surveyor’s compass with which to run a straight line from Atlanta to Chattanooga, the Master Carpenter of the road, with two supervisors, the overseers of divisions, can, having their eyes with which to see, their common sense upon which to act, a common spirit level, some stakes and tape line, lay out and make a better road and a shorter road for less than \$3,000,000.”<sup>29</sup> However, it should be said in defense of Long and his associates that modern engineering has largely vindicated their judgment; the road follows in 1950 much the same route that he established in 1837.

Overshadowing all the limitations was the marvelous fact that the western and Atlantic was completed. The gateway of the Southern Appalachians had been swung open. This state-owned route, which was operating before the Baltimore and Ohio or the Pennsylvania

<sup>27</sup> *Southern Recorder*, August 27, 1850.

<sup>28</sup> Johnston, *op. cit.*, p. 42. The rolling stock consisted of 13 locomotives, 4 passenger, 3 baggage, 4 box, and 7 platform cars. The strange disproportion of locomotives and cars is not explained.

<sup>29</sup> Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railway: *Employees Educational Service*, Lesson Number 1, “The Development of Transportation in Southeast Prior to 1845,” p. 28.

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reached the Ohio River, was the first to be built to a tributary of the Mississippi from the seaboard. Twelve years after the Cherokee Indians had been forced to migrate westward from the area traversed and just twenty-five years after the first railroad, the Stockton and Darlington in England, had operated as a common carrier, the keystone had been placed for the rail system of the Southeast. Trains could carry passengers and freight from Chattanooga to either Charleston or Savannah.

In Chattanooga, at the speechmaking time celebrating the opening of the Western and Atlantic, a spectator, who wrote years later, said the orator was so full of "hurrah juice" that two gentlemen had to hold him on a keg while he "hic-upped" through his remarks. The *Chattanooga Gazette* called for "One Thousand cheers to the State of Georgia," while De Bow's *Commercial Review of the South and Southwest* said that the completion of the railroad "infused a new and progressive spirit" into the people of Tennessee.<sup>30</sup>

Those who had invested in Chattanooga real estate when the railroad was planned now saw their foresight justified. Men like Tomlinson Fort and Ker Boyce took a new interest in their speculation as land values were certain to react to the new status the railroad had conferred on the community. Yet as conservative men they did not celebrate immediately. With a tone of restrained anticipation, Dr. Fort wrote in October, 1849, "We shall soon see whether Chattanooga is to be a village or a City."<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> *De Bow's Review*, IX (1850), p. 227; Hamer, *op. cit.*, I, p. 421.

<sup>31</sup> Tomlinson Fort to Arthur Rosseter, October 20, 1849. Fort Mss., Chattanooga Public Library.

## CHAPTER VIII

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### *Junction Town*

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EVEN before the shuttle service to Dalton was installed, efforts were made by Chattanoogaans to divert trade southward over the new route. As early as 1846, John P. Long, for example, announced that arrangements with the railroads and agents in Savannah had been made to forward and receive freight. Soon a fairly large business in grain, bacon, flour, and cotton sprang up, with most of the latter commodity being brought from North Alabama by steamers which risked the bad water below the town. At first, this trade was limited by the necessity to wagon everything to the northern end of construction of the railroad, but as the completed section advanced, interest grew in the use of the new transportation. With the opening of the through route in the late spring of 1850, southbound freight began to accumulate in Chattanooga.

Little cotton was produced above Chattanooga, but so much came from downstream, that the crude port and terminal facilities were swamped. The bales were placed under the sheds available until no more could be accommodated, then they were put in any vacant place. The sides of the streets were often lined for virtually their whole length with parapets of the South's greatest crop. The city authorities felt called upon to pass an ordinance prohibiting smoking in the storage area because there was the constant fear that the cotton would be set on fire.

In addition, piles of bacon, stacks of grain, barrels of whisky and molasses, hogheads of Louisiana sugar, and other freight were piled

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around the wharf and neighboring streets. Corn was the most important of these items. From river tributaries it was brought in all types of craft to Chattanooga on its way to the markets of the seacoast and the lower South. By 1853, at least eight forwarding and commission merchants and two wholesale grocers were engaged in the collection and shipping of these products.

Coal from neighboring small mines also began to move through town. A dealer in "Stone Coal" in Chattanooga was placing his business card in advertising columns by 1853, and *De Bow's Review*, which had its finger on the economic pulse of the South, stated that the "Coal of East Tennessee is destined to become one of its greatest sources of wealth."<sup>1</sup>

The agent of the W. & A., in an effort to bring some sort of order out of the chaos of accumulated products, adopted barbers' rules or a "ship according to turn" plan. He required shippers to register all their freight on arrival in a book kept in his office, but it was often weeks before it would be moved. There were complaints of favoritism in the order in which goods were placed aboard the trains for movement. That there were grounds for such protests is displayed in the suits brought against the company "by nearly every shipper for damages, and after three years litigation, it cost the Western and Atlantic nearly a quarter of a million dollars." This brought about an official regulation of the company, based upon a law passed by the Georgia legislature, that agents were required to forward freight in the chronological order in which it was received,<sup>2</sup> or suffer penalties.

Passenger traffic increased on the W. & A. along with freight. Newly opened watering places proved popular with people from the lower South, where the humid summers and accompanying diseases caused those who could to seek vacation spots in the mountain areas. Officials of the railroad reported that mineral springs, the rich and varied scenery, "together with the bold features around Chattanooga are all objects of interest and attract summer visitants." Not all such

<sup>1</sup> *De Bow's Review*, XII (Jan., 1852), 93; J. P. Campbell, ed., *The Nashville, State of Tennessee, and General Commercial Directory*, I, 182-186.

<sup>2</sup> Johnston, *op. cit.*, p. 330; J. E. McGowan, ed., *Chattanooga: Its Past, Present and Future*, p. 35.



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travelers were enthusiastic. One reported that there was no depot. The train stopped in an old field and the passengers walked down to the Kennedy House, which was a frame building near the river. His visit was in the fall and no boat had run on the stream for some time because of the low water. "I thought what a fool I am," he said many years later. "Here I am, locked in by these mountains with no way to get out unless I take the train back. I was on my way to Alabama. The people with me agreed with me and wondered what fool had built a railroad into such a place."<sup>3</sup>

The small appropriations which had been made by the state to improve the river had failed to accomplish more than a meager beginning. One dramatic illustration of the extent of the danger still to be found in the mountain area below Chattanooga was the sinking of the *Lincoln* in the spring of 1851. "The night was extremely dark and cloudy," reported the *Knoxville Register* of May fifteenth, "and the captain had landed and after two or three hours, considered it light enough to run out, but just as it [the steam boat] got into a most difficult place, an overshadowing cloud prevented the pilot from seeing his course, and the boat foundered on a rock. . . ."

State authorities, feeling the necessity for assistance in controlling the stream, abandoned the position that the Federal Government should leave internal improvements to the states and sent a memorial to Congress in 1846. It was hoped that Chattanooga and Knoxville would be declared ports and that Federal funds would be appropriated for the improvement of the river. It took nine years to accomplish these purposes. In 1852, \$50,000 were allotted from Federal funds to provide a channel of two feet the year around from Kelly's Ferry to Knoxville. Three years later, Chattanooga was made a port of delivery.<sup>4</sup> Work on the river under the new auspices was begun in 1853.

Fifteen years had elapsed since the Cherokee Removal. Progress within the little community of Chattanooga had been slow, but the settlers were still sure of its ultimate greatness. As in most frontier communities, churches and schools had been erected as soon as life began to take on settled aspects. Community religious activities,

<sup>3</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, November 3, 1894.

<sup>4</sup> Letter from National Archives, Sept. 20, 1948.

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which were held in the little log schoolhouse, were conducted by Matthew Hillsman, although he said he "was not there for ministerial, but for secular pursuits." Hillsman was a Baptist and located at the Landing in 1838. His venture as a storekeeper did not prove successful, but in the early years it was responsible for keeping him at Chattanooga, where he performed marriage ceremonies, preached funeral sermons, and supplied vacant pulpits regardless of denomination.<sup>5</sup>

Twenty-eight Presbyterians met on June 21, 1840, to organize the first congregation of that denomination. Two of the original number, Ainsworth Blunt and John Vail, had been members of the Brainerd Mission. Neither was an ordained minister, although they may have occupied the pulpit occasionally. They were elected elders, along with eight other prominent men of the community. Meetings continued to be held in the schoolhouse until a church building was completed in 1845. This was constructed on the first lot—on the southwest corner of East Third and Walnut streets—which was deeded to a church congregation by the town commissioners under the agreement by the original group of settlers.

The Methodists grew in number and engaged their first minister in 1843. They also used the community log cabin for their meetings until 1847, when they made claim for their lot and built at the corner of Fifth and Lookout streets. Because of the square cupola which sat over the entrance, the building was popularly called the "Pepper Pot Church."

Following these two denominations, other groups organized as their numbers became sufficiently large. Before 1860, the Baptists, Cumberland Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Roman Catholics were formally organized under resident pastors and met in buildings constructed for their purposes. The Baptists and Cumberland Presbyterians received lots from the commissioners but the Episcopalian and Roman Catholic congregations were too late for such assistance.

For the twenty-three years between the founding of Chattanooga and the outbreak of war in 1861, information about social activities

<sup>5</sup> J. J. Burnett, *Sketches of Tennessee's Pioneer Baptist Preachers*, First Series, I, 231-239.

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is very scant. For a major portion of the time, only one newspaper—Parham's *Chattanooga Gazette*—was in existence. Later it was joined by the *Advertiser*, founded in 1853, and there is mention of the *Vindicator*, a temperance organ, of which no copies are known to be in existence. But few copies of the *Gazette* and the *Advertiser* are to be found, and the major local interest in their pages is in trade and transportation.

From the retention of the designation, "little log schoolhouse," for the building about which many community activities centered, it is obvious that it was used largely for educational purposes. The census of 1840, which makes no separation, however, of town and county, lists five schools.

Although community interest in this decade was largely held by the onward progress—or lack of it—of the Western and Atlantic Railroad and the growing use of the river, there were other exciting diversions. The Mexican War found the people of Hamilton County as interested as other areas of Tennessee, a state which furnished many recruits for the "gone to Texas" contingent. Three companies were raised, and later a regiment was organized, although the war ended before it could leave the county.<sup>6</sup>

Texas was not the only lodestone for those who impatiently viewed the slow progress at Chattanooga. The California gold fever hit the community with the same degree of excitement that it did the whole of the eastern country. It was particularly contagious for those with great expectations despite limited means. A "practical tailor," who could not finance himself, offered in typical amateurish verse to share his expected riches with anyone who would pay his expenses on the westward journey:

Got the Gold Fever but got no brass—  
Doomed to stay at home like a stupid Ass,  
But if I only had a little *tin*,  
The way I would go would be a sin,  
And in California's sand of gold  
I surely would my name enroll.

<sup>6</sup> Armstrong, *op. cit.*, I, 190, 191, 319, 320.

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I keep my head cool,  
And keep my feet warm,  
And if I'm a fool  
I mean no harm—  
But to California I will go  
If I can can get but half a show.<sup>7</sup>

For those who were still determined to make Chattanooga the scene of their fortunes, there were other interests—homes to build, family and social life to develop, things of equal importance with business world activities. Some showed the permanence of their location by erecting expensive homes for the time and the place. Brick houses were scattered here and there in the heavy woods, which still dominated the hillsides. As far as architecture was concerned, the only limits were the pocketbook and the imagination of the builder. There were a few typical examples of Southern antebellum homes. One is described as “an elegant one-story frame, with large fluted columns, with Ionic caps in front.” However, the majority of the houses were simple and well adapted to purposes of living in such a new community.

Commercial buildings, toward the end of the decade, began, so the *Gazette* says, “springing up in Chattanooga as if by magic.” Thomas Crutchfield, Sr., had erected the first brick building for business purposes in 1840, a structure of three stories at the southwest corner of Market and 4th streets. In the years which had elapsed, other permanent store structures had risen to take the place of the original log buildings. One of these was a center of interest because of the opportunity it offered for social use. Captain John G. Glass erected the Chattanooga Hotel and provided a ballroom on its second floor. If a dance happened to be scheduled in bad weather, swains without horses and carriages of their own could secure the assistance of M. B. Parham’s livery service to transport their ladies over the muddy streets and lanes.

Christmas, the Fourth of July, and election days provided the best chance to celebrate. At the Yuletide there was a great deal of musket firing with “accidents in proportion.” Crude fireworks consisted of

<sup>7</sup> *Chattanooga Gazette*, Feb. 16, 1849.



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cotton balls wrapped with wire and soaked in turpentine. These were set afire and thrown by hand to burn intensely and to illuminate the dark surroundings. Most of the parties of the winter months took the form of candy pulls. After the molasses material was properly prepared, the "boys and girls would pair off. . . . The boys held while the girls pulled."

Possibly the best example of the Independence Day celebrations occurred on the eightieth anniversary of that event. The day was bright and clear, and though no special preparations had been made, the "spirit of '76 developed into spontaneous ceremonies." A large crowd gathered when the bells of the community rang out. The Declaration of Independence was read, and the mayor made a speech. After dinner, the report of a cannon notified the people that new features were to be expected. Handbills were passed out which announced that a balloon ascension would be held. The balloon, which was manufactured by an "ingenious fellow-townsmen," was decorated with the Stars and Stripes. It sailed off into the sky and, the recorder notes, "they all felt they had a nice show."

That night the festivities took a political turn. The "Fillmore and Donelson boys" attempted to follow the example set in the afternoon by having a balloon of their own with the names of the candidates they supported inscribed on it, "but as some careless or malicious person cut a large hole in it, it was a failure." Not to be outdone, the celebrants fell back upon the customary turpentine balls and the streets were kept "brightly illuminated till a late hour."<sup>8</sup>

All classes joined in the excitement attending the national political campaigns. In the year 1844, James K. Polk, of Tennessee, opposed Henry Clay for the Presidency. One enthusiast "came over to town with a perfect drove of negroes, big, little, old and young, riding horses, mules, jacks and jennies, colts, etc. He bought each of them a new hat. Perhaps he got a jug of benzine and gave them all a drink. When they mounted their stock to leave town, each had a polk stalk to carry, and they all began to sing their political song. No street circus show ever excited the boys of Chattanooga more than this.

"One of the campaign songs of that year had as a kind of refrain,

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, July 12, 1856.

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'Hooray, hooray, the country's risin' for Henry Clay and Freeling-huysen.'" One of the Negroes, who "had evidently been tampered with by the enemy," soloed an original version, "James K. Polk and George M. Dallas, one's for hell and the other for the gallows." This brought upon him the indignation of his master, to the further delight of the assembled onlookers.<sup>9</sup>

The straggling frontier village, however, gave precedence to its daily problems which concerned largely matters of community living. A new charter was secured from the state legislature on November 5, 1851. This complimented the residents in one particular, for Chattanooga despite obvious limitations, was designated a city by it. It provided that the area should be divided into at least four wards, each to be represented by two aldermen to be elected by the residents. The mayor was to be chosen by a city-wide vote, rather than by the aldermen as under the old charter. A recorder's court was established. It was to have jurisdiction over all violations of ordinances passed by the board of aldermen, and had the power to bind over to the state courts all violators of the criminal laws of the state. The right to buy and sell property, which had been held by the town commissioners, appointed at the time of the original land entries, was vested in the new city government.<sup>10</sup>

There were two amendments to the charter within the next five years. The first, passed during the session of the legislature in 1853-1854, provided for the extension of the city limits, although the area so incorporated was not liable for city taxes as long as it remained in woodland or was used for farming purposes. The other authorized the city government "to erect a lock-up house or calaboose," in which violators of the city ordinances could be kept while working out their fines on the streets.

One of the first acts of the new government was to authorize the payment of \$5.00 to that active citizen, John P. Long, for having taken the census of the community. The board received permission

<sup>9</sup> Wiltse Manuscript, pp. 44-45.

<sup>10</sup> The first mayor under the new charter was Dr. Milo Smith, who presided over the meetings of Larkin Hair, Marcellus B. Parham, John P. Long, J. J. Bryan, Robert Cravens, William Crutchfield, David C. McMillin, and John A. Hooke, who comprised the board of aldermen.

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to use the cellar of one of the houses owned by the Crutchfield estate as a temporary calaboose. A city marshal was appointed and a night watch established. All the force was empowered, in the event they met "with resistance, when in discharge of duty required of them through law and ordinance, to call for the aid of citizens and bystanders. . . ." It was further resolved that the "night watch be . . . required to cry the hour from 10 o'clock P. M. until daylight."

The mayor and board then proceeded to the matter of regulations. Among the first was one requiring proper observation of the Sabbath day. "Whoever shall within this city on Sunday be engaged in any game or games shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor." Moreover, the evil of cards was not tolerated in public at any time: "Whoever shall in this city in any street or public place, or so near as to be seen by passersby, be engaged in any game of cards, whether anything is bet or not, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor. . . ." Traffic was strictly regulated. Horses and mules were not to be ridden on the sidewalk. Wagons and carriages could not be left where they obstructed the use of stepping stones placed for the convenience of pedestrians to cross the streets. No one was to erect a rack or post for hitching horses on Market Street. Penalties for such offenses varied from fines of one to five dollars, or "if a slave, ten lashes."

The sale of meat by butchers or grocerymen received attention. "It shall be the duty of all butchers to exhibit the ears of such animals as they offer for sale to the clerk of the market, and to give description of the marks, brands and color so killed." The intention of this ordinance is obvious; apparently there was fear that advantage might be taken of the widely roaming cattle and hogs. Fire protection was on a typical, volunteer basis, but recognition was made of the city government's necessity to provide tools with which to accomplish it. All the ladders belonging to the city were to be gathered and left with the fire company, which was to secure "two fire hooks and three axes at the expense of the corporation."

The streets had to be improved. Ditches should be dug to carry off surface water. Market Street was to be provided with a plank road "laid in two right foot tracks at a convenient distance from each other. . . ." However, this soon proved inadequate. The tracks



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were narrow for some vehicles and were often out of repair. Furthermore, something should be done for all the streets of the community. A committee on streets was appointed and stressed in its report to the board of aldermen the importance of this matter.

No man of taste ever built a fine house on a street inaccessible because of hills, ravines and artificial excavation. Such streets, and towns of such streets, are, if possible always avoided by those who regard the comforts of life as a matter of primary importance; and although our city may boast of a population in many respects as worthy, frugal, industrious and energetic, as are to be found elsewhere, yet, it is not to be denied that we could be all the better for still further additions to our population of those having a taste for the luxuries and refreshments of life and with capital to improve, beautify and adorn our city. So universally are bad streets and bad houses or good streets and good houses associated that it is sufficient as a general rule to know the character of the streets in order to form a correct idea of the character of the houses or even of the inhabitants of a town.

Despite the exhortations of the committee and some efforts to improve the situation, muddy streets were to remain to plague Chattanooga for many years.

Public wells were dug and those then in existence were improved. Provisions were made to lay off the bounds of the burial ground which had been used ever since the coming of the whites to Ross's Landing, and for payment to the owners for the land. Some assistance for the latter was secured by a concert, which netted the sum of fourteen dollars. Another ordinance provided "for the erection of a building for the use of the free school in the city." Obviously, a "city" could no longer depend upon the "little log schoolhouse" of the wilderness. A resolution to erect a city market building, which when completed was also used as a town hall, was adopted.

To care for these expenses, a system of tax revenue was devised. A yearly tax of five mills on the dollar upon the value of town lots, slaves, jewelry, watches, gold and silver plate, pianos, and pleasure carriages. Some exemptions were provided; these included: "Lots held for or by any religious society, lots appropriated for the use of schools, all property belonging to the city, slaves under twelve and over fifty years of age, pianoforte used in schools or academies, all



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silver tea and table spoons, all stocks exempt by the State of Tennessee." Another exemption stated, "that any mill or manufacturing company propelled by steam that is established within the limits of the city shall be exempt from a corporation tax for the term of five years from the date of going into operation."

What the authorities termed "privileges" were specifically assessed. Slave traders were taxed \$500 annually. Theaters were licensed at \$10 a performance, while circuses and menageries paid a higher price of \$30 a day. Operators of a "ten-pin alley" were assessed \$10 a year, and it cost \$50 to have a "Jenny Lind table." A license to sell spirituous liquors could be secured for \$25.

"Free persons of color" were charged a head tax of \$5 annually for each male and \$3 for every woman. They were required to register with the city recorder and to show proof of their freedom. If they were unable to do this, they were "deemed to be slaves and . . . dealt with as such. . . ." Slaves were strictly regulated by an ordinance, which provided that they could not remain in town at night or over week ends, unless they lived there, without the permission of their owners or employers. They were not allowed to gather in groups for any purpose except "public worship," and even then it had to be "under the superintendency of some white person."<sup>11</sup>

Although commercial activity was increasing, none of the local group undertook to establish a bank until 1853, when the Bank of Chattanooga opened its doors. The census for 1850 gives one man as a "banking agent" and in the same year the Union Bank of Tennessee was authorized by the legislature to open a branch at Chattanooga. Three years later, a branch of the Bank of Tennessee was operating under the presidency of James A. Whiteside, and the Williams brothers decided to start the Bank of Chattanooga.

These were not members of the same family that was prominent fifteen years before in the land syndicates. James and William Williams became interested in Chattanooga by their participation in the river trade. James Williams first appears in 1850 as the captain of the

<sup>11</sup> Wiltse Manuscript, pp. 210 ff. *Chattanooga News*, April 9, 1930. Both these sources used the Minute Book of the city government for 1852 through 1858, but unfortunately this original record was misplaced or lost sometime after its use in 1930.

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steamboat, *Chattanooga*, the first of a fairly long list bearing the same name. The two brothers operated the Tennessee River Mining, Manufacturing and Navigation Company and virtually established a monopoly on the river by the purchase of steamboats. William Williams was president of the bank and was elected mayor of the community in December, 1853, although he resigned the office the following July. However, James is the more interesting of the two. He was given a silver service by Chattanoogaans for his contribution to the development of the river, but he was a writer as well as businessman and steamboat captain. He was the author of *Letters of an Old Whig*, which were published in the campaign years of 1856. The next year, he was appointed minister to Turkey by President Buchanan. His Southern sympathies caused him to resign when war broke out in 1861. He then went to England, where he sold Confederate bonds and contributed articles in defense of the Confederate cause to London papers. These activities brought a charge of treason against him, as his resignation was not received until some of the articles appeared. He never returned to the United States but died in Austria, still under indictment. His brother remained in Chattanooga as president of the bank until 1858, when ill health caused his retirement and he moved to Nashville.<sup>12</sup>

While the Williams brothers and their associates were applying their energies to the development of steamboat interests, other Chattanoogaans continued to focus their attention on railroads. After the chartering of the Nashville and Chattanooga stock subscriptions were solicited. The cities of Charleston and Nashville invested heavily, while private citizens of communities along the route, including Chattanooga, took stock. In 1848, the company was organized, and Vernon K. Stevenson was elected president.

The topography of the country offered many difficult engineering problems. The right of way had to be threaded through valleys and mountain passes, and the river had to be bridged. Construction was begun in March, 1848, with many of the subscribers to stock paying

<sup>12</sup> T. J. Campbell, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-33; Armstrong, *op. cit.*, I, 147, 148, 393-394; W. E. Beard, "A Saga of the Western Waters," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, II, 328-329.

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their subscriptions with the labor of their slaves. No practicable way was found to evade the major Cumberland ridge, so a tunnel through it was constructed. This was completed in February, 1851, and the participants in the work and officials of the company celebrated "knocking the daylight" through the mountain. The gravest problem of construction was that of vexing landslides in the numerous mountain cuts. In some places, earth slid down as fast as the contractors could move it, burying the roadbed frequently as much as eight or ten feet. Work proceeded rather rapidly, despite these difficulties, cholera epidemics among the laborers, and the need to call on the state of Tennessee three times for financial assistance.

In May, 1853, the Nashville and Chattanooga was opened from Nashville to Bridgeport, Alabama. From that point river steamers carried freight and passengers to Chattanooga, when the stream was usable. The next year, the bridge over the river was completed, and the entire line was opened. The first train made the trip on February 11. Three months before the opening of the road, the company owned seventeen wood-burning locomotives, weighing from fifteen to twenty-one tons, except for the monster "Grampus." This engine scaled twenty-seven tons and was an object of much pride until it proved too heavy for the track. One hundred and seventy-nine cars of nine different classifications composed the remainder of the rolling stock. The trains crawled "under rock and on the brink of chasms, now running on the edge of valleys, clothed in perfect forests, and now shooting into long tunnels . . ." as they worked their way through the mountains. In just a few months more than eight years after the company was chartered, it operated to Chattanooga, where it made connections with the W. & A.<sup>13</sup>

The railroad from Memphis, which was also planned to connect with the Western and Atlantic at Chattanooga, had fallen somewhat behind in the competition. Its charter was secured February 2, 1846,

<sup>13</sup> Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railway: *op. cit.*, Lesson Number 2; S. J. Folmsbee, "The Origins of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, No. 6 (1934), pp. 81-95; T. D. Clark, "The Development of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, Series 2, III, 160-168; Hamer, *Tennessee, a History*, 1673-1932, I, 421-433.



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but it was not until April 29, 1850, that the company was organized with ex-Governor "Lean Jimmy" Jones as president. The principal difficulty which had to be overcome was the desire of Mississippi to dictate the location of the part of the route which lay within its borders. Some problems arose about other rights, including the incorporation of the road, which had been built to portage goods and passengers around the worst portions of Muscle Shoals, within the system. This was accomplished in 1850, and by 1852 work was started on the other portions. It proceeded fairly rapidly. A major part of the route lay through rolling hills, where construction problems were few. However, the Nashville and Chattanooga had preempted the best right of way between Stevenson and Chattanooga, so an agreement had to be made whereby the Memphis and Charleston could use the N. & C. tracks for that distance. This harmonious arrangement was helped by the connection of ex-Governor Jones with both companies, and its wisdom is demonstrated by the fact that it continues to the present.

On March 28, 1857, President Jones drove the last spike in the iron clasp which connected the Atlantic Seaboard with the Mississippi River. For more than two decades, the city of Charleston had worked to accomplish such a plan. It had invested heavily in all the roads except for the one constructed by the state of Georgia. In celebration of the completion of the Memphis and Charleston, a special train ran from the "old lady by the sea" to the city of the bluffs on the great river. Its passengers brought with them kegs of water from the Atlantic. After proper speeches, the large throng of local people and visitors witnessed the marriage of "Old Ocean" and "King of Floods" as the salt water was sprayed on the Mississippi.<sup>14</sup>

At first it appeared that Charleston's optimism had been borne out, but within a year or so, cotton growers in the area of the Memphis and Charleston sought the shorter rail haul to Memphis so as to enjoy the cheaper rates of the river steamboats which plied regularly from that river port to New Orleans. Charleston's failure to capture trade with this railroad affected Chattanooga, and the bales of cotton,

<sup>14</sup> T. D. Clark, "The Building of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, No. 8 (1936), pp. 9-25.



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which lined Market Street after the coming of the W. & A., became less noticeable.

This had less influence upon the spirit of Chattanooga than might have been expected. True representatives of the American frontier, they still looked to the future to accomplish the destiny of their new home as they had originally conceived it. Furthermore, the Memphis and Charleston was an important addition to the network of railroads, even though it did not prove as helpful as had been hoped. Its iron rails did provide a better tie with the western country than the uncertain river. In addition, no time should be wasted in worrying over its failure to accomplish all that had been expected, particularly when there remained two other avenues to and from the growing junction point, through which railroads should be built.

The long valley between Lookout and Sand Mountains was a natural gateway to the cotton country of Alabama and Mississippi. The editor of the *Chattanooga Advertiser* consequently began to agitate for the construction of a railroad through that region. About the same time, some residents of Alabama and Mississippi decided to promote a road to connect their section with the areas in East Tennessee and the Middle West. A convention was called to meet in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, in the fall of 1853. Its members approved a project to be built between Meridian, Mississippi, and Chattanooga. The Alabama legislature formalized the idea by chartering the North-east and Southwest Railroad Company—so-called because of the direction it followed in the state—in the same year.

The road was to be built in a somewhat co-operative fashion, with local communities undertaking either to finance or construct sections close by. Chattanooga was forced, therefore, to take a more active part than had been the case in the other railroads. Its particular interest was in the section which ran from its limits south to Gadsden, Alabama. A portion of the route lay within the borders of Georgia, but it was the corner which was separated from the rest of the state by Lookout Mountain. The mountain formed a formidable barrier to transportation, and consequently, this northwestern section of Georgia looked more to Tennessee and Alabama for its commercial connections than to its own state.

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James A. Whiteside was again prominent in the efforts to secure the new railroad. He called a meeting of the residents of Chattanooga to hear the prospects of the venture described. There was an enthusiastic response to the proposals. The city authorities subscribed \$100,000 to the project, provided another \$500,000 was secured by the sale of additional bonds. To take care of the financing of the town's subscription, a special railroad tax was levied. The Will's Valley Railroad Company, the name given to the portion of the system for which Chattanooga and its area was responsible, secured its charter February 28, 1854, and A. M. Johnson, the son-in-law of Whiteside, was appointed to superintend its construction. However, only about ten miles of the road was completed before war stopped it.<sup>15</sup>

To complete the rail network at Chattanooga it was important to get a direct connection with the east. The old Hiwassee Railroad Company, which had been chartered in 1836, had been organized to construct a road to parallel the Tennessee River and link up with the Georgia road, then planned. Dogged by various problems for more than a decade, the company was reorganized and renamed the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad Company. By 1855, its trains were in service from Knoxville to Dalton, Georgia, where it made connection with the Western and Atlantic Railroad. But the passengers and freight carried over the line were inconvenienced, if destined for points west or northwest, as it was necessary to go south to Dalton and then back to Chattanooga. It was obvious that a link from Chattanooga to the E. T. & Ga., at or near Cleveland, Tennessee, would provide much better service.

As early as 1850, a charter for this connecting line was issued by the state. Little if anything was accomplished by the promoters of the short road, so the East Tennessee and Georgia secured its rights in 1856 and began construction. Work was made difficult by the ridges which stood across the way and a tunnel had to be dug

<sup>15</sup> A. M. Johnson, Compiler, *Genealogy of a Branch of the Johnson Family*, pp. 100-101, 119. State of Tennessee: *Acts Passed at First Session of 30th General Assembly*, 1853-1854, p. 698. The Wills Valley ran from Trenton, Georgia, to Wauhatchie, where it made a junction with the Nashville and Chattanooga, the tracks of which it used to the city.

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through Missionary Ridge to enter Chattanooga, but by 1858, trains began to move over the thirty-mile stretch. Since Knoxville had been reached by other roads, which led to the northeast, this link assumed unusual importance, as it joined Chattanooga directly with the Valley of Virginia and the cities of the Virginia tidewater.<sup>16</sup>

A depot to take care of freight and passengers was erected by the Western and Atlantic railroad at the southwest corner of Ninth and Market streets in 1852, but the growing traffic of the next few years particularly as the other railroads reached Chattanooga required an increase of facilities. An agreement was consequently made in 1856 by the W. & A. and the Nashville and Chattanooga for the erection of a joint terminal on Ninth Street, west of the first structure. When the Memphis and Charleston and the East Tennessee and Georgia completed their tracks to the community, they also became participants in the new joint terminal, which was completed in 1859 at an expense of a "little less than \$38,000." William Crutchfield took advantage of the opportunity by building a hotel across from the depot, and advertised in 1856 that it was open for business. It shortly became an important center of local activity.

The location of the railroad terminal at Ninth Street created a problem for those who operated on the river, as the railroads soon discontinued service down Railroad Avenue and thus required that goods for transfer to or from the river boats which came in had to be carted over the mile which lay between the terminal and the wharf. The river obviously had begun to be subordinated to the railroads as the important means of transporting freight and passengers. The rivermen also became a target for politicians when a candidate for mayor advocated that itinerant retail trade by flatboatmen be prohibited because it was unfair competition for the taxpaying merchants of the community.<sup>17</sup>

In the earliest days of Chattanooga, business activity had centered

<sup>16</sup> J. W. Holland, "The East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad, 1836-1860," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publication No. 3* (1931), pp. 89-107; State of Tennessee: *Acts Passed at First Session 28th General Assembly, 1849-1850*, pp. 477-478; *Acts Passed at First Session 31st General Assembly, 1855-1856*, pp. 143-147.

<sup>17</sup> *Chattanooga Advertiser*, December 22, 1859.



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around the river. Now it began to be attracted to the terminal of the railroads, and had reached past the original limits of the town. Nevertheless, the community was not compactly built. "Chattanooga is a new place, apparently just cut out of the woods," so Porte Crayon, the writer and artist, reported after his visit in 1857. "It contains four or five thousand inhabitants and has some pretty and substantial buildings dotted about on its straggling and irregular streets, which are often interrupted by stumpy fields, ponds and patches of forest timber. Such towns usually cannot boast of many attractions, other than those of a commercial and speculative character; but the site of this place is associated with many of the most interesting incidents in the early history of Tennessee, while the natural beauty of its surroundings makes it a spot where an artist would love to linger."

Porte Crayon came to Chattanooga by river on the *James Williams* from Knoxville. The men in his party walked from the wharf to the Crutchfield House, while the ladies and baggage were conveyed in a carriage. "The hotel swarmed with people," he wrote, "arriving and departing with the trains, east, west, north, and south, hurrying to and fro with eager and excited looks, as if lives, fortunes, and sacred honor hung upon the events of the next hour. All the corners and byplaces were filled with groups in earnest conversation, some were handling bundles of papers, others examining maps. Rolls of banknotes were exhibited, and net purses with red gold gleaming through their silken meshes. In the confusion of tongues the ear could catch words, Lots — Stocks — Quarter-section — Depot — Dividends — Township — Railroads — Terminus — Ten thousands — Hundred thousands — Million."

Even the waiters in the dining rooms were so busy swapping coats that the guests grew impatient with the service. And when they later went out on the street, they were stopped by three small boys, who also had the speculative fever. They offered some empty bottles for sale "at a bargain." When the members of the party asked what they would do with empty bottles, the hopeful sellers said they would make good containers for beer or whisky. However, no sale was accomplished and one of the party remarked, as they walked down the street, "... we are in a nest of speculators, where anything may



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be had at a bargain, ranging from a man's soul down to a beer-bottle."<sup>18</sup>

Not all the visitors to Chattanooga had their attention arrested by the speculative possibilities as did so many of those observed by Porte Crayon, who probably exaggerated slightly for the sake of picturesqueness. The residents of the coastal areas of the South were constantly in search of summer places which were remote from the dangers of yellow fever and malaria. The mountains around Chattanooga had "hygienic resources" as well as picturesque scenic splendor. James A. Whiteside, who had entered large areas of Lookout Mountain at the time of the Cherokee Removal for himself and associates, soon grasped the business opportunity afforded by the development of the mountain as a summer resort. Some of his associates obtained on February 16, 1852, a charter to build a turnpike up Lookout Mountain with toll privileges. After the road to the mountaintop was opened, people began to avail themselves of the cool heights and constructed summer cottages.

Full realization of the opportunity came with the building of the Lookout Mountain Hotel, which opened its doors in the summer of 1856. Cottages were also available for those who wished to bring families and servants for longer stays. There was carriage service over the turnpike, with four and six horse conveyances meeting the trains and steamboats in the season. Arrangements were also possible for "Music and Dancing Parties."<sup>19</sup>

The hotel evidently offered its services to conventions, for on July 4, 1857, a meeting of the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church from the Southern dioceses was held there. The object was the creation of a Southern university to be sponsored by the denomination. The city of Chattanooga entertained the members of the convention and even brought the local band to the mountaintop to give a concert

<sup>18</sup> D. H. Strothers, "A Winter in the South," *Harpers Monthly Magazine*, XVII (Aug., 1858), 297-300. The population was greatly overestimated by the visitor.

<sup>19</sup> *Chattanooga Gazette*, May 10, 1856; State of Tennessee: *Acts Passed at First Session 29th General Assembly, 1851-1852*, p. 64. Incorporators of the hotel with Whiteside were Benjamin Chandler, J. J. Griffen, and Joseph McCullough.

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of patriotic airs. Naturally, the community leaders hoped Chattanooga would be chosen as the site of the university. Bishop Leonidas Polk of Louisiana, who was later to traverse the vicinity while on the tragic missions of war, encouraged them in the belief that it might be selected by a statement in his letter calling attention to the need for the institution. The remarkable rail facilities, which were to be found at Chattanooga, he pointed out, would "indicate these high lands as the region for our union and co-operation. They have merit of centrality and accessibility, and from the rapidity of movement attained by railway contiguity also they offer mountain air and pure water and are beyond the reach of epidemics. The cost of living is cheap, and they are within the pale of the plantation states." Other nearby areas were brought into consideration, however, and Chattanooga did not succeed in securing an institution of higher education so early. A large gift of land on top of Cumberland Plateau was accepted and the University of the South, popularly called Sewanee, was located there.<sup>20</sup>

Not too much can be clearly ascertained about education in Chattanooga at the time. One source reports in 1853: "As yet . . . it had done but little towards building up permanent high schools." There are occasional advertisements of various academies and some families received other pupils along with their own children for instruction. The most important schoolmaster of the period was Professor H. W. Aldehoff, who was induced to come to Chattanooga from Cleveland, Tennessee, and open a school in 1850. His movements, however, indicate the precariousness, then, of a schoolmaster's existence. In the next nine years, he moved from Chattanooga to Kingston, back to Cleveland and then again to Chattanooga, where he secured a place on Lookout Mountain and started Aldehoff's Institute for Boys, which opened March 1, 1860.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> G. R. Fairbanks, *History of the University of the South at Sewanee, Tennessee*, pp. 14, 29-31; Wiltse Manuscript, pp. 245, 246, 278, 279. The entertainment of the visitors cost the city a total of \$434. Representatives of Chattanooga attended a second meeting, held in Montgomery, Alabama, the following November, and were authorized to pledge a gift of \$50,000 to the institution, if it were located on Lookout Mountain.

<sup>21</sup> *Chattanooga Advertiser*, December 22, 1859; J. B. Campbell, *op. cit.* p. 182.

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The Chattanooga Female Institute, organized under the auspices of the Masonic Lodge of Chattanooga, was chartered in 1855.<sup>22</sup> It opened its doors in September, 1856, and the following January, sufficient progress had been made in the polite art of music for the young ladies to give what the *Advertiser* called a "commendable performance." The paper went on to say that the instructor had been indefatigable in his labors and had shown "that there shall be nothing wanting on his part in elevating our musical tastes and accomplishments. Will the people come up and sustain him?"

Such was the question the editor asked in closing his article. It was a reasonable one, for Chattanooga was still but an unpretentious village, despite all its activities and apparent opportunity. This is made evident by Dr. Thomas Jefferson Eaton, an itinerant physician, who arrived in 1856 for a stay of a few weeks, seeking opportunity to practice his four specialties: operations for harelip and clubfoot, the fitting of glass eyes, and the correction of crossed eyes. Apparently he had an interesting visit. He attended a book auction, which was held by another itinerant, "Brown the bookman." He met the two former New Yorkers, Crandall and Cooper, publishers of the *Advertiser*, whom he considered "first rate fellows." He and a colleague, Dr. Sears, bought a peck of oysters and roasted them for an enjoyable feast.

He operated upon several people and fitted a glass eye for a gentleman, who was persuaded to keep it by his friends, despite its cost. He visited one cross-eyed girl, who, he decided, might just as well "remain cross-eyed as not, for she was dirty as a pig. I think there are more *squalid* dirty ragged ordinary looking men and women in this country than I have seen this side of *heathendom*." Dr. Eaton had an eye for girls, but he obviously was disappointed in Chattanooga. "The boys here I think are pretty good fellows," he confided in his diary, "but if they have any good-looking women here I have not seen them."

<sup>22</sup> Seven prominent citizens were trustees: the Reverend E. Strode, John C. Burch, Robert Cravens, John L. Divine, Thomas McCallie, H. W. Massengale, and E. W. Marsh. Assistance for this school was requested of the city government, but the latter, though approving the project, felt financially unable to support it. Wiltse Manuscript, pp. 236, 272.

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As to Chattanooga, itself, he had rather positive ideas. "It made," he wrote, "too great an effort in its *young* days, and overbanked, and is nearly broke. There are great quantities of coal in its immediate vicinity also iron ore. Manufacturing may bring the town out some day, but agriculture never can."<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> T. J. Eaton, "Diary of an Itinerant American Surgeon in 1856," transcribed by George F. Hacker, *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* (1947), XXI, 204-207.



## CHAPTER IX

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### *Peace to War*

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As Doctor Eaton went on his way to minister to the unfortunate from his traveling office, Chattanooga continued its daily life conscious of the fact that its future was based on a different kind of economy from that typical of the plantation South. The farms of the narrow valley hinterlands which supported agricultural activity were small and diversified. Life in the rural sections of East Tennessee bore no semblance to that of the cotton-growing region; capital was very limited and slave labor was frequently unprofitable. So as the disturbing issues of economic regionalism and "the peculiar institution" which had affected the lower South for years evolved into a boiling political battle, the outlying districts around Chattanooga remained isolated and largely immune from its forces.

The people of the town, likewise, appear to have remained aloof from the mounting crisis. Commission merchants who bought and sold the surplus farm products of the Tennessee fields were still doing an important business. But the trading mart which had developed with the coming of the railroads began to lose some of its importance as new roads made through connections possible. In the late forties processing plants and industry dependent on the forest and mineral resources of the region had begun to develop. Capital was difficult to find for such ventures, as the newness of the town

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meant there was little money to plow back into business. However, by 1860 Chattanooga had grown into an important community, according to the standards of the area and the period. It had a population of 2,545, of whom 457 were Negroes.<sup>1</sup>

Despite its frontier appearance, the little straggling community had begun to acquire a cosmopolitan population. In 1850, only three foreign countries were represented among the citizens; by 1860, men and women of ten nationalities were living at Chattanooga. The most numerous of the foreign group were the Irish, the majority of whom had come to assist in the construction of the railroads. The Germans, who were next in number, were largely artisans and craftsmen. The interest in iron had attracted English molders and engineers. Other countries which had sent sons and daughters to this faraway area, were Italy, Switzerland, Canada, Prussia, France, Sweden, and Cuba. A Chattanooga, as he walked down the street, could look into the window of a German tailor, who guaranteed the latest in stylish cut clothes, and could call on a Swiss cabinetmaker for the painstaking task of creating home furnishings. Possibly the most sought of these glamorous merchants were De Georgis and De Voti, who had come from their native Italy to operate an "ice cream and oyster salon," to which they especially invited ladies for "a glass of excellent ice cream." It is probable that the ladies also constituted the majority of the clients of the native of Sweden who taught music.<sup>2</sup>

Some slaves were owned by townspeople and trading in slaves was not unusual. In 1849, F. A. Parham offered some lots for sale and noted that he would take "cash or Negroes" in payment.<sup>3</sup> Later, there was an announcement of a constable's sale at the market house when a Negro girl was to be auctioned. The only organization which was engaged professionally in the traffic of slaves of which there is

<sup>1</sup> 9th Census, Population and General Statistics, p. 264; an unofficial contemporary source, J. L. Mitchell, *Tennessee State Gazetteer and Business Directory for 1860-61*, lists the total population at 3,500.

<sup>2</sup> 8th Census, 1860, *Population Schedules Work Sheets*, Volume 8.

<sup>3</sup> *Chattanooga Gazette*, February 16, 1849.

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a record was A. H. Johnston and Company, which had offices on Market Street opposite the W. & A. depot.<sup>4</sup>

The work sheets of the 8th Census, which undoubtedly give only a fraction of the complete picture, list ninety-nine free Negroes in Chattanooga. They were employed as blacksmiths, day laborers, draymen, farm hands, washerwomen, and seamstresses. The most important of this group was William Lewis, blacksmith and wagon-maker, who at the age of thirty-nine reported real estate worth \$1,500 to the census-taker in 1850. A decade later, he reported \$7,000 and had a family of eight children. One of his sons was then blacksmithing and a daughter gave her occupation as a milliner.

Lewis was a remarkable man, who apparently made a permanent impression upon all who knew him. He had been a slave, "but being an expert blacksmith, had purchased his time for \$350 a year. He was soon able to buy his wife and himself at \$1,000 each. Then he set up a shop, hiring other hands, and bought his six-year-old son for \$400; his mother and aunt for \$150 each, as they were old, came next; two brothers followed for \$1,000 each. A slave trader bought his sister for him for only \$400—the best bargain he had made; then he paid for his house, and laid up a large amount of money besides. Such a man is a genuine hero. He was not able to do business in his own name, under the black laws, and was obliged to pay a white man largely to legalize his transactions."<sup>5</sup>

Representatives of virtually all the states in the Union were found in the population, although the majority were from Tennessee and neighboring areas. They were engaged in typical trades and professions. Three showed the continuing interest in the future prospects of the community by calling themselves "Speculators" in the census work sheets. About thirty stores were available for trade, with at least twelve dealers in wine and liquors. Six commission merchants, including the reliable John P. Long, who divided his attention between business and judicial duties as recorder, were in

<sup>4</sup> *Chattanooga Advertiser*, January 8, 1857.

<sup>5</sup> W. R. Pittenger, *The Great Locomotive Chase*, page 245. Pittenger met Lewis, when the latter forged irons on him as a prisoner of the Confederates in 1862; *Chattanooga Times*, Sept. 3, 1896; his obituary in this issue says Lewis came to Ross's Landing in 1837. He was 86 years old at the time of his death.

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business. The Bank of Chattanooga and a branch of the Union Bank of Tennessee were available for financial transactions, and six law firms, of whom Welcker and Key were probably the most important, offered legal advice. Six hotels testified to a growing tourist trade, while three weekly newspapers—one published on Tuesday, another on Thursday, and the third on Saturday—kept the population informed about local and outside events. Beason and Cocke operated the ferry, still at the same place at the foot of Market Street. There were an “ambrotype artist,” to record the likenesses of such who wished them, a bookstore, where stationery and “fancy goods” could also be purchased; and Daniel Kaylor, in addition to other activities, offered a recreational opportunity in his “billiard saloon.” One marble worker, the results of whose labors are still visible in the old cemetery, advertised that his stones were cut “at northern prices.” Five churches and two schools served the community.<sup>6</sup>

Almost from the beginning, Chattanooga seemed determined to develop an industrial pattern of economy. In the early 1840's, a group who called themselves the Friends of Domestic Manufactures organized and passed resolutions encouraging people to start manufacturing projects in Chattanooga. In 1852, the Board of Aldermen enacted an ordinance “to advance manufacturing.” In 1860, there were twenty-two small establishments in Hamilton County, the majority of which were located within the town's limits. The total invested capital amounted to \$209,300. The cost of the raw materials used was \$229,305. The hands employed were 210 men and four women, whose wages totaled \$78,420. The annual value of the products of these industries was \$395,380.<sup>7</sup>

The majority of these firms were engaged in processing local products of farm and forest. Among the more important of these efforts were flouring mills, woodworking plants, tanneries, and packers. However, they were all small and tentative beginnings. The men engaged in manufacturing were pioneering, and their methods were basically those of trial and error. However, these early manufacturers were already lifting their eyes to wider marketing horizons

<sup>6</sup> J. L. Mitchell, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-31.

<sup>7</sup> 8th Census, 1860, *Manufactures*, p. 565.



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than the strictly local. The presence of good transportation and a vision of the future aided to make a reputation possibly out of proportion to the immediate accomplishment. They continued to talk of available resources and prospects more than finished products.

The Lookout Mills was managed by Charles E. Grenville, who had made Chattanooga his home in 1850 and was serving in 1860 as its mayor. This mill had a capacity of fifty barrels of flour a day. The flouring mill of Bell and Company could produce 150 barrels a day, and the distillery operated by the same firm had a maximum daily output of sixty barrels of whisky. Years later, an old-timer, in a reminiscent mood, said that "one time I bought from him [Bell] ten barrels of as fine corn juice as ever trickled down a guzzle, and I paid him 14 cents per gallon."

Benjamin Chandler and Company, pork and beef packers, employed fifty-four hands in 1860 and did a business of \$130,000. Undoubtedly, they sold hides to the local tanners, Bynum and Richardson, who were reputed to have the largest steam tannery in the South at the time. In addition to hides, this firm utilized large amounts of bark gathered in the forests of the area. Available lumber supplies logically led to the erection of sawmills and woodworking establishments. In 1859, *De Bow's Review* noted the wide sale of these products: "Chattanooga is but a town of a day's growth, as remote from the coast as it is possible to be: and yet it is framing the houses for Nashville and Augusta, and has two large furniture establishments worked by steam, which supply in part the wants of those cities and other towns in the interior."<sup>8</sup> The more important of these two plants was McCallie, Marsh and Company. The other was operated by Joseph Rouhs, of Swiss origin, who had moved to Chattanooga in 1850 and in 1860 advertised that he was a wholesale and retail manufacturer and dealer in furniture.

Most outstanding of these industrial efforts, because of the influence it was to have upon the Chattanooga economy after 1865, were the smelting and working of iron. From about 1790 small forges and bloomeries were operated in the hills and valleys of East Tennessee.

<sup>8</sup> *De Bow's Review*, Vol. XXVII, August, 1859.

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Deposits of limonite or "brown ore" were available through the area. It was a good ore for the primitive processes used, as it was easily mined and smelted. The dense forests of the area furnished an apparently inexhaustible supply of charcoal. This fortunate juxtaposition of materials had attracted the attention of prospective iron magnates long before Dr. Eaton made his observation in 1856.

The first attempt to utilize the opportunity in the Chattanooga area was the already described effort in 1807 to build a furnace on the Chickamauga in the then Cherokee country. Observers like Featherstonhaugh and Troost had mentioned as easily accessible veins of both iron and coal. As soon as it became definitely assured that the Western and Atlantic Railroad would unlock Chattanooga's isolation and be met there in time by other railroads, two companies were organized to engage in the manufacture of iron and its products. Not only would the railroads, themselves, furnish a constant market, but plantation needs were also large.

The state legislature of Tennessee passed a bill with the caption, "An Act to incorporate the East Tennessee Iron Manufacturing Company, and for other purposes," on November 27, 1847. The first four sections of this act deal with the particulars of this company. No incorporators are given, although commissioners were appointed to open books for subscriptions to the capital stock, which was authorized from \$20,000 to \$250,000. The fifth section of the act grants the corporate charter of the Chattanooga Iron Manufacturing Company, which was to issue stock to the amount of not less than \$100,000 and not more than \$300,000.

The incorporators of the Chattanooga Iron Manufacturing Company comprised one of the most prominent groups of men ever to be associated in a Chattanooga enterprise. Ker Boyce and Farish Carter, who had been active in land speculation in the area, were among the wealthiest, if not the wealthiest, men in their respective states, South Carolina and Georgia. George W. Crawford had been governor of Georgia in the period of the construction of the W. & A., from 1843 to 1847. He later was a member of the Cabinet of President Zachary Taylor. John P. King was also a resident of Georgia and represented that state in the U. S. Senate. He was president of

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the Georgia Railroad and Banking Company from 1841 to 1878 and was one of the most important industrialists of the ante-bellum South. J. Edgar Thomson was an engineer, who had been prominently connected with the building of Southern railroads after his appointment as chief engineer of the Georgia Railroad in 1832, when he was only twenty-four years of age. In 1852, he became president of the Pennsylvania Railroad and served until his death in 1874. The other six of the incorporators were local men, led by the constant promoter of Chattanooga's interests, James A. Whiteside.<sup>9</sup>

From the evidence available, it appears that only one company operated, the East Tennessee Iron Manufacturing Company, and that shows evidence of a combination of resources, under the presidency of James A. Whiteside and with Robert Cravens as manager. Cravens, who had moved to Chattanooga in 1851, had gained experience in small iron forges and furnaces of East Tennessee, while he was a young man. The charter of the company was amended in 1852 to allow the capital stock to be increased up to \$1,000,000. By the next year, the plant was in operation, and its owners announced to the public through the columns of the *Chattanooga Gazette* that it was "prepared to execute orders of every description of cast, wrought Iron or Brass Work, at short notice and in the best manner. We are prepared to manufacture chilled railroad car wheels of the very best quality and freight cars of any description. Also, all other descriptions of cars or railroad columns, still and caps of any pattern desired for buildings. Also saw and grist mill castings of the latest and most improved kinds, Hotchkiss' water wheels, gin and crane gear, shafting pulleys and hangers, etc."<sup>10</sup>

This company, however, operated on a smaller scale than was anticipated obviously by its organizers. In part, this may have been due to the fact that the interest of the out-of-town incorporators was diverted from it for one reason or another. Ker Boyce, who was as active as any other in the group in promoting the "new South" as-

<sup>9</sup> State of Tennessee: *Acts Passed at the 1st Session of the Twenty-Seventh General Assembly, 1847-48*, pp. 47-48. The biographical details were gathered from scattered sources including the *Dictionary of American Biography*.

<sup>10</sup> *Chattanooga Gazette*, January 20, 1855. The advertisement was first placed on April 5, 1853, according to the insertion notice it carried.



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pects of Chattanooga, died in 1854. Thomson was enticed away from the area about the same time by his selection as president of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. Carter, who was well along in years, was finding his attention more and more occupied by the great plantations he had acquired in Alabama and Georgia. King was far more interested in promoting the development of Augusta and in particular the textile industry there. George W. Crawford, after the death of President Taylor, returned from Washington to his home near Augusta and apparently spent the time administering his plantation until his appearance as chairman of the Georgia Secession Convention. This left the Chattanooga members of the group to conduct the corporation.

The original plant was located at the south end of the town, but the company also constructed a blast furnace on the bluff overlooking the Tennessee River. Ore, charcoal, and limestone were brought from such places as Thief Neck and Half Moon islands to Chattanooga by the company's steamboat. The pig iron slid down chutes from the furnace to the water level for convenient loading on flatboats and barges for shipment on the lower river. No existing records indicate the scope of operations, but by 1856 the foundry and machine shop of the company was leased. After several changes, Webster and Mann purchased these works in 1858 and renamed them the Chattanooga Foundry and Machine Works.<sup>11</sup>

Thomas Webster was the more important of the partners. He was of English birth and had had wide experience with European and American railroads. A connection with the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad, while it was under construction, first brought him to Chattanooga. The foundry, according to its advertisements, was prepared to construct "steam engines and boilers, mining and mill machines," and to repair locomotives "with neatness and dispatch." In 1860, forty-nine men were employed at the works, and the total production amounted to \$75,000 annually.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *Chattanooga Gazette*, July 12, 1856; *Chattanooga Advertiser*, January 8, 1857 and December 22, 1859. In 1856, the lease was taken by Eastman, Lees and Company, with Thomas Webster listed as a partner. In 1857, the company was known as Webster and Lees.

<sup>12</sup> 8th Census, 1860, *Manufactures*, p. 566.



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Among the orders filled were those for heavy machinery for the Polk County Copper Company near Ducktown, Tennessee, and the Vulcan Iron Works, which Colonel S. B. Lowe was constructing at Chattanooga.<sup>13</sup> The copper ore in the Ducktown basin, about fifty miles east of Chattanooga, had been discovered in 1843 by prospectors looking for gold. After some years of hectic scrambling and staking out claims, organized companies began to put in their appearance. Again, Southerners interested in developing the mineral resources and industrial opportunities in the region joined with men from other areas to develop this new potentiality. By 1860, approximately the time of the installation of the machinery made in Chattanooga, the copper region was a beehive of activity. More than 1,000 men and boys were engaged in the mining, smelting, and transportation of the ore.<sup>14</sup> Although not closely associated with Chattanooga industrially, Ducktown represented the same spirit of economic vigor and interest, not generally attributed to the South in these years.

During the 1850's, a number of corporations were chartered to engage in some phase of the mining and manufacture of iron in the Chattanooga area.<sup>15</sup> However, the foundry and furnace built by the East Tennessee Iron Manufacturing Company continued to be the principal metal working plants in the town. In 1854, several of the prominent men who helped form this company—Whiteside, Boyce, and Cravens—chartered the Etna Mining and Manufacturing Company. This organization was effected to work coal veins in the mountains which had been opened for exploitation by the building of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad.<sup>16</sup> Other coal mining developments were started about the same time, and by 1860, the mines in

<sup>13</sup> R. E. Barclay, *Ducktown Back in Raht's Time*, p. 84; L. L. Parham, *First Annual Directory . . . of the City of Chattanooga . . . for 1871-72*, p. 53.

<sup>14</sup> Barclay, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-86. A letter in the Key Collection, from D. M. Key to J. Johnson, of Madisonville, June 9, 1854, says the "copper fever" was high in Chattanooga and "heavy" trading was a consequence.

<sup>15</sup> By acts of the state legislature, charters were granted to the East Tennessee Mining and Manufacturing Company, the Chattanooga Iron Foundry, Steam Engine and Nail Manufacturing Company, and the Tennessee River Mining, Manufacturing and Transportation Company.

<sup>16</sup> State of Tennessee: *Acts Passed at the First Session of the 30th General Assembly, 1853-54*, pp. 393-394.

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Marion County, alone, produced coal valued at \$408,000. This interest in coal, which had not been worked to any extent in Tennessee prior to 1850, possibly led to an effort to bring the latest methods of ironmaking to Chattanooga, when the bluff furnace was leased to James Henderson of New Jersey.<sup>17</sup> This young proprietor planned to remodel the property and brought Giles Edwards, an experienced ironmaster, to Chattanooga. Under the latter's direction an iron cupola stack was constructed and arrangements made to smelt ore with coke. In May, 1860, a trial blast was run and about 500 tons of pig iron made before the coke was exhausted. Again on November 6, Presidential election day, the furnace was lit but by December operations under Mr. Henderson discontinued. The problems of the industry itself and the unsettled political climate, which Henderson, a Union, man, found in Chattanooga, was responsible for the decision. But to his credit must be recorded the making of the first coke-fired iron in the South.<sup>18</sup>

As an indirect result of Henderson's stay in Chattanooga, the town experienced a short but momentous visit by a man whose name is deeply inscribed in the annals of the American steel industry. With the family of Giles Edwards there was a young girl, who had been sent South by her parents, close friends of the Edwardses, to escape the ardent attentions of a boisterous youth. "Whatever happens," the parents directed, "don't let Harriet marry Bill Jones." Mrs. Edwards promised to do her best to carry out the injunction. She did not expect Jones to make his appearance in the community, but when he did, she exacted from him the promise daily that he would not attempt to marry his sweetheart. His invariable reply, according to accounts, was that he would not do so that day. The routine continued until he had matters adjusted. Then he purposely avoided Mrs. Edwards, sought out his lady love, and before night they were married.

<sup>17</sup> 8th Census, 1860, *Population Schedules Work Sheets*, Vol. VIII. Strangely enough, the section of the same census on Manufacturers contains no mention of this furnace or its operation.

<sup>18</sup> Ethel Armes, *Story of Coal and Iron in Alabama*, pp. 175-176; *Steel Facts*, "Supplying Confederacy's War Needs Taxes Furnaces and Mills of South," No. 72.

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Captain "Bill" Jones, as he became known because of his service with the Federal Army, became one of the most important figures in the Carnegie Steel organization. At the time of this Chattanooga sojourn, he was young and impetuous, and his Union sympathies got him into such controversy that, according to the extant stories, he soon decided to move to more equable areas. He left Chattanooga shortly after his wedding, which took place April 14, 1861.<sup>19</sup>

Chattanooga's political complexion was pretty stable. Election returns for the period between 1836 and 1860 for Hamilton County disclose that the vote was always very close, with the Whigs winning both local and national elections by very small majorities.<sup>20</sup> Though the citizens, many of them new to the region and united by an interest in material opportunities, chose to remain aloof from the growing national dissensions, there were, of course, occasional evidences of the latter within the community. For a while, *The Gazette*, after its sale by Parham to Lewis L. Poats in 1855, carried on its masthead the typical Know Nothing slogan, "Put none but Americans on guard," but Parham soon resumed the ownership of the paper. The more extreme issues of the late fifties affecting slavery and union had hardly more influence. A newspaper, *The Southern Confederacy*, was started in 1858 with John P. Hambleton as editor. Hambleton, according to the Reverend T. H. McCallie, was "a bright, strong, racy writer, but a radical of the intensest type. He was about as hot and extreme on the Southern side of politics as Wendell Phillips on the abolition question. His paper did not have a long life. It was in an uncongenial atmosphere, and soon departed this life."<sup>21</sup>

On the other side, at neighboring Harrison, *The Unconditional Union* attempted to uphold its obvious principles, but with no greater success than *The Southern Confederacy*. Parham decided to discontinue his paper, *The Gazette*, in September, 1859. He told his son: "I see a war between the states approaching. I know that it will come and I do not wish to engage in any controversy concerning the causes,

<sup>19</sup> Armes, *op. cit.*, p. 176. It is interesting to note that Harriet Lloyd with her parents was living in Chattanooga in June, 1860, according to the Census Work Sheets, a fact which may be contradictory of this story of her marriage.

<sup>20</sup> Goodspeed, *op. cit.*, p. 815.

<sup>21</sup> McGuffey, *op. cit.*, pp. 235-236.



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or have anything to do with it." Shortly after, *The Gazette* was revived under the editorship of James Hood, a staunch Union supporter.<sup>22</sup>

Despite these occasional glimpses of the great issue of the day, local matters naturally took precedence in such a new community. The townspeople apparently led rather quiet lives, if the report of the city marshal for the month ending September 20, 1857, offers a complete picture. It reads: "To service this month as city marshal, \$50; killing two dogs, 50 cents each, \$1; removing two dead hogs, 50 cents each, \$1; removing one dead sow, \$1; removing one dead cat, 50 cents; paid for medicine for paupers, \$2.20; fourteen meals to prisoners in calabous, \$1.25; arresting one free Negro under vagrant act, \$2; total, \$59.50."<sup>23</sup>

There was nevertheless increasing legal activity to accompany the growing commerce of the community. The county seat was still at Harrison, twelve miles distant, but the major portion of the business originated in Chattanooga. The state legislature at its meeting in 1858 consequently created local courts to have jurisdiction over all civil and criminal cases arising in the Chattanooga area.

Chattanooga received the news of John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, Virginia, with the excited attention which was common throughout the country. Some residents had a peculiar interest in the old man, himself. Mrs. Mahala Doyle, the widow of James Doyle, who with two of their sons had been murdered by Brown on the Pottawatomie Creek in Kansas, lived in town. In an interview with the local press, she recalled details of the gruesome incident. The Doyles had lived in Chattanooga before they moved to Kansas. She pointed out that they were not slaveholders and held no interest in the slavery question.<sup>24</sup>

Local people were greatly divided upon that issue, although no fundamental cleavage had as yet developed. In its gateway position between the plantation slave areas and the upland country where

<sup>22</sup> Armstrong, *op. cit.*, I, 154-155; McGuffey, *op. cit.*, p. 235.

<sup>23</sup> *Chattanooga News*, April 9, 1930, reprints from the records of the city of Chattanooga, 1852-1868.

<sup>24</sup> *Chattanooga Advertiser*, December 22, 1859.



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slavery was never securely established, Hamilton County felt the influence of all schools of thought. Its population had been drawn from all parts of America and several foreign countries. It had few inherited prejudices or traditions. Geographically, however, it was a part of East Tennessee. That section had never been a dominantly slave area. Though slaves were owned in all its counties, the proportion of slave-owning families was far less than that generally in the South. In one county, only one family in fifty-eight were slave owners, but the usual proportion ranged from one in twenty-five to one in five. In the fifteen slave states, approximately one family in three owned slaves. In the proportion of slaves to whites, the average in East Tennessee was approximately one to twelve, that for Middle Tennessee was one to three and in West Tennessee three slaves to five whites. The general average in the South was one to two. In Hamilton County, the proportion was one slave to nine whites, while in Chattanooga, it was approximately one to six.<sup>25</sup>

The attitudes of East Tennesseans and of the residents of the mountain areas of the South generally were more complex than is usually understood. Their strongest fundamental tenet was adherence to the Union. The dominant political alliance in East Tennessee was to the old Whig party, and there was a general suspicion and hatred of the Democrats, even though the most prominent member of that party in Tennessee was a local son, Andrew Johnson. The majority of the population were small farmers who had little cash income. Among them there was dislike of the wealthy, plantation-owning, aristocratic class. They also feared strong government because of its power to tax and thereby to place limitations upon their highly individualistic way of life. The region was isolated and the people generally uninformed. *The Knoxville Whig*, edited by the strongly partisan "Parson" Brownlow, was their chief source of information.<sup>26</sup>

On the issue of slavery, which was dividing the country, East

<sup>25</sup> E. M. Coulter, *William G. Brownlow, Fighting Parson of the Southern Highlands*, pp. 85-86; Hamer, *op. cit.*, I, 455; 9th Census, 1870, *Population and General Statistics*, p. 364.

<sup>26</sup> Even after Brownlow joined the American or Know-Nothing Party, he continued to call his newspaper *The Whig*; see Coulter, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-125.

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Tennesseans held an opinion in common with their highland brethren of neighboring states. It was at variance with that of either of the sections most active in agitating the question. They were anti-Negro rather than antislavery. They feared what might happen should the slavery system be overturned without an accompanying removal of the Negro from the American scene. Under no circumstance did they want a breakup of the Union or a war to defend slavery. "Let the people who own niggers, protect 'em," Brownlow's *Whig* gave as the mountain attitude in 1860.<sup>27</sup>

In Chattanooga, there were men who held the opinion common in East Tennessee, but direct associations with the Lower South had influence on others. In December, 1859, the *Chattanooga Advertiser* printed an advertisement sponsored by a group of Charleston firms, which called on Southerners generally to sever commercial relationships with Northern wholesale houses. It was claimed that the Northern businessmen had donated funds to circulate Hinton Helper's book, *The Impending Crisis*, then being used for propaganda by the Abolitionists. The *Advertiser* said editorially: "All of us hold sentiments in common on the agitating question of the day, slavery, and all of us desire as far as practicable to become commercially independent of the North."<sup>28</sup>

The editor, however, did not speak with complete authority either for Chattanooga or for Tennessee. The state, along with its neighbors of the border, still wished that some way could be found out of the apparent impasse. Its position continued to be one of neutral hope between the extremes of secession on the one hand and abolition on the other. In the campaign of 1860, the four candidates represented most of the gradations of opinion held by the people of the country. Though Abraham Lincoln disavowed any intention of disturbing the *status quo* on the slavery question, the reputation of "Black Republicanism" alienated Southerners. John C. Breckinridge's position on slavery and states' rights pleased those who followed a more extreme

<sup>27</sup> V. M. Queener, "East Tennessee Sentiment and the Secession Movement, November, 1860-June, 1861," in *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, XX (1948), 59-83; M. R. Campbell, "Tennessee and the Union, 1847-1861," in *ibid.*, X (1938), 71-90.

<sup>28</sup> *Chattanooga Advertiser*, December 22, 1859.

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Southern attitude, although it was sufficiently moderate at the same time for such a staunch Unionist and Democrat as Andrew Johnson. John Bell, native Tennessean, followed a much more conservative and conciliatory course, which was directed to secure the support of the moderate Democrats and onetime Whigs. He disregarded the slavery issue and based his appeal entirely upon the Constitution and the Union. Stephen A. Douglas, whose purpose was largely the same as that of Bell, was, however, so tinged with the idea of "squatter sovereignty," that he was handicapped both North and South.

Douglas came to Chattanooga October 29, 1860, on a belated speaking tour of the South. His visit was a great occasion for the community, which was "possessed of two spirits—the spirit of politics and the rectified spirit of alcohol." A great crowd was present, drawn out of curiosity to see and hear the Little Giant. He was met at the train by three brass bands and a militia detachment. The crowd was so dense about the depot and the Crutchfield House across the street that the men in uniform had to make a passageway through the throng for the visitor. He was presented to the assemblage from the second story of the hotel by John L. Hopkins, a local lawyer, and made a short comment, thanking the people for their reception.

After resting for a few minutes, Douglas was taken to the stand which had been erected in a sort of natural amphitheater shaded by numerous trees. The official carriage was followed through the streets "by an immense procession, with the banners floating in the breeze and the bands playing national airs. The enthusiasm was immense! . . . Everybody seemed to be carried away with it. Cheers for 'Douglas' and the 'Union' and the 'Constitution' rang out, clear, loud, heartily and spontaneously all along the route, say of a quarter of a mile."

For more than two hours, the Little Giant held the attention of the gathering, which crowded in close to the stand so that no word of the orator would be lost. Douglas's Southern tour was made with little hope of securing personal support; he had determined that his mission so late in the campaign should be directed toward persuading his hearers that whatever the result of the election there could be no justification for dissolving the Union. The majority of his audience was apparently in sympathy with his position, although few were



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to support him at the polls little more than a week later. "His speech throughout was a strong appeal for the Union and the Constitution," one reporter wrote. "It was generally regarded as one of the most patriotic and able speeches ever listened to by those present."

After supper, the holiday mood of the crowd continued. The bands played and Douglas was again forced to make an appearance on the balcony of the Crutchfield House. Tired and in need of sleep, he left the speaking to others and shortly departed to his next engagement, in Atlanta.<sup>29</sup>

Following the desire to find some compromise between the attitudes of the extremists, both Hamilton County and Tennessee, in the presidential election of 1860, cast the majority of their votes for Bell. Lincoln received no votes in Tennessee at all; Douglas polled but 11,384 in the state and 165 in the county. Breckinridge's support totaled 65,053 over the state and 820 in the county. Bell, who carried but three states—Tennessee, Kentucky, and Virginia—got 69,710 in the state and 1,074 in the county. Hamilton County's vote was again typically divided with Bell's majority over Breckinridge limited to 254.<sup>30</sup>

With Lincoln's election the crisis deepened. The interim period between the election and inauguration bore a harvest of attempted compromises and vexing confusion, which were reflected in Tennessee and Chattanooga in various ways. Led by South Carolina, states of the Deep South started a procession of secession. Governor Isham G. Harris of Tennessee issued a call for a special session of the legislature to convene early in January to decide the state's course of action.

On January 21, 1861, Jefferson Davis, senator from Mississippi and one of the most prominent political figures in the nation, arose in his place and announced his departure regretfully from the Senate. His route home took him through Chattanooga, where he planned to spend the night. When the town folk learned of his presence, a large group gathered at the Crutchfield House. Two prominent law-

<sup>29</sup> *Knoxville Whig*, November 1, 1860. G. F. Milton, *Eve of Conflict*, pp. 498-499.

<sup>30</sup> Goodspeed, *op. cit.*, p. 815.



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yers, John L. Hopkins and David M. Key, waited upon Davis with the request that he speak to the assembled crowd, which he reluctantly consented to do. Mr. Davis was not one of the fire-eating secessionists although he was an ardent states' rights man. The Chattanooga group was divided in sympathy. Many of the citizens were onetime Whigs, who, though Southerners, were not politically aggressive and still hoped for a compromise of the issue.

Wearied from his travels and disturbed over the difficulties of the hour, Davis spoke briefly. Two who were present afterwards gave their impression of his remarks, which they described as short and moderate. In them he attempted to give a "dispassionate review of matters which had led to the crisis in our national affairs. . . ." When he had finished, Davis with some friends left the room. Immediately, William Crutchfield, who was "rough in manner and speech" and an "uncompromising Union man," jumped upon a counter and began a heated reply. He denounced Davis as a traitor and indignantly repudiated his claim of the right to secede.

When Davis was informed of Crutchfield's reply he returned to the lobby, where he had spoken. He found that tempers had mounted and pistols had been drawn. Some reports are that Crutchfield's brother, Thomas, the proprietor of the hotel and a Southern sympathizer, pulled him off the counter and hurried him out of the room. Another has it that "the fury of the men forced him to quit speaking." According to one story, the screams of some ladies, who included Mrs. Davis and Mrs. Thomas Crutchfield, added to the confusion. Davis said that he had been insulted and wanted to know if his opponent were "respectable and reputable" so he could be challenged. There was no duel fought as an outcome, but the report of the incident was spread broadcast over the South and contributed to the emotional unbalance of the hour.<sup>31</sup>

The incident at the Crutchfield House illustrated the tension, as the necessity to make the momentous decision grew closer. February

<sup>31</sup> Armstrong, *op. cit.*, I, 124-125, quoting Judge Lewis M. Shepherd; O. P. Temple, *Notable Men of Tennessee*, pp. 109-113; V. H. Davis, *Jefferson Davis, Ex-President of the Confederate States of America*, II, 6-7. Mrs. Davis gives a different version of this episode which she witnessed and described as "merely the vagary of a drunken man. . . ."

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9, 1861, was the day which had been set aside by the legislature for the people of Tennessee to vote on the issue of calling a convention, which would consider a resolution of secession, and to elect delegates to the convention should one be held.

The two leading Chattanooga newspapers were divided on the fundamental issue. The *Advertiser*, edited by Phillips and Hill, was secessionist, while the *Gazette*, with Hood and Metcalfe as its editors at this time, supported the cause of the Union. Each typically used the same arguments to sustain its position: Truth, right, justice, and freedom were on its side, while responsibility for the crisis rested with the other.

Chattanooga was experiencing what is called the largest flood since 1847, but its effects were subordinated to the political question. The *Advertiser* for January 24, 1861, positively stated that the issue "for Tennessee to determine is simply whether she will go with the Southern states, or unite her destiny with those Faithless Northern States, which have so flagrantly outraged the Constitution, and ruthlessly trampled right and justice under feet." In another editorial, the editors continue in the same vein: "To talk, however, of preserving the Union in its purity is vain and idle at this late moment. Anyone who hopes to preserve an *honorable constitutional* Union with the fanatical States of the North certainly has been unobservant of what has transpired in the political world within the last few months. He has certainly taken no notice of the bold, defiant, and uncompromising spirit by the enemies of the South." The issue was impossible to compromise. "If we recede from our present position," the editors warned, "all is lost and we sound the death knell of our own liberties. . . . Let the patriotic outbursts of every true Southerner be 'Resistance to tyrants is obedience to God.'"

The issue of the *Gazette* for the same week was no less vigorous and determined in its opposite opinion. With reference to the coming election, the editors pointed out that Tennesseans still had the power to save themselves. "If they go into a Southern Confederacy they will not be in a condition to help themselves. With military rules and, in all probability, a military government, they will have to submit like slaves." They reprinted a strong editorial from the

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*Nashville Banner* upholding this position. It pointed out that "all efforts at compromise were being defeated by a minority of Southerners. The purpose of these men is clearly indicated by this course. A Southern Confederacy is their dream of the future—a strong government — perhaps a military despotism — where they can rule and riot while the people toil under the heavy burthens of direct taxation. . . . The word has gone forth that as Tennessee goes so goes the country. . . . Gallant, Chivalrous, Union-loving Tennessee, the home and resting place of Jackson, in his lifetime the terror of disunionists—is to decide between fanaticism North and disunion South. She is the keystone of the South. Her Voice will have an important influence in the crisis. The issue is a momentous one. The life or death of the Republic—the perpetuity of American Freedom—depends." The editors repeated the questions which had often plagued East Tennesseans, and bade the people answer: "Do the PEOPLE intend to be coerced by King Cotton into submission? Is there no other interest to subserve but that of a few planters and office seekers? Is everything else forgotten but the Negro?" In another place, they made the flat assertion: "The people are for the Union and the politicians against it. Which are right, the people or the Office seekers?"

The position of the editors of the *Gazette* was upheld when the people of Hamilton County went to the polls. They rejected the proposed convention by a vote of 1,445 to 445,<sup>32</sup> with practically all the minority vote coming from Chattanooga. In East Tennessee, Unionist sentiment prevailed by a margin of five to one, while the state as a whole gave a decisive majority against the holding of a convention.

An editorial in the *Daily Nashville Patriot* for April 12, 1861, summarized the meaning of Tennessee's position, as expressed by this vote, with unusual perspective. With calmness and conviction, the editor wrote, "The Union in all its majestic dimensions and glory might be restored on the free consent of a great people guilty of mistakes and freely acknowledging and nobly correcting them." No patriotic son of Tennessee but "would not now rejoice in the reali-

<sup>32</sup> C. W. Lusk, *Some Phases of Chattanooga History During the Civil War*, p. 8, unpublished manuscript.



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zation and fruition of such hope." It still appeared, however, that war would develop. It was not the choice of Tennessee, but its coming would leave no alternative but the taking of sides with one or the other of the contesting areas.<sup>33</sup>

On the very day of the publication of this editorial, action was precipitated in another part of the South, just as the writer had feared. When the news of the firing on Fort Sumter was received, it was realized that all hope for a peaceful solution was gone. In Chattanooga a typical demonstration of Southern adherents took place. On the brow of Lookout Mountain, near the hotel owned by Colonel James A. Whiteside, who was a strong secessionist, the boys and girls of the Aldehoff School lighted two barrels of coal tar, made patriotic speeches, and sang "hastily improvised songs." "The whole heavens were lighted with [the] bonfire. . . ." <sup>34</sup> It was a prophetic introduction to four long years.

President Lincoln issued a proclamation on April 15, calling for "the militia of the several States of the Union, to the . . . number of seventy-five thousand," to use against the seceded states. Governor Harris immediately refused to comply with the call for troops and summoned the legislature into special session. The governor instructed this body to break with the Union and to prepare a means for uniting with the Confederacy. On May 6 and 7 the legislature passed measures to accomplish both purposes and named June 8 as the day for a popular referendum to accept or reject its actions.

Opinion changed overnight all over the South after Lincoln's call for troops. Those who had hoped for a solution other than war realized that the latter was then inevitable. This is well demonstrated by the complete change of the editor of the *Daily Nashville Patriot*. He pointed out that the situation was hopeless for peace. The North seemed determined on war, which placed Tennessee in a difficult position, since she had tried to co-operate with the Union. However, the state could not join in coercive measures against the seceded states which were her neighbors. Consequently she was thrown regardless of desire into the war. "Tennessee does not claim the right

<sup>33</sup> D. L. Dumond, ed., *Southern Editorials on Secession*, pp. 492-494.

<sup>34</sup> L. M. Shepherd, *op. cit.*, 98-99.



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of secession," the editor wrote, "but she acts, like freemen ought always to act, upon the inherent right of revolution."<sup>35</sup>

Some East Tennesseans, however, still hoped that their state could be kept out of the conflict. On the eve of the referendum, a convention was held in Knoxville and attended by Union men from all parts of the section. They wanted to rally conservative men so that the elections in June would properly testify their opinion. "Strong and emphatic Union resolutions" were adopted. Permanent officers were chosen with instructions to call a second meeting after the election returns were known.<sup>36</sup>

Even before the elections, troops had been raised to join the armies of the Confederacy. Peter Turney, a Winchester lawyer who maintained an office in Chattanooga, organized a regiment and moved to the Virginia front. The governor and the assembly moved fast during this period in committing Tennessee to the Confederacy, although the majority of the members from East Tennessee constantly protested. On the secession resolution, the senator from the district of which Hamilton County was a part voted for it, while the member of the House from the same area opposed it.<sup>37</sup>

When Tennesseans went to the polls, almost two months after Fort Sumter, they voted for secession 104,913 to 47,238. Thus Tennessee became the last state to join the Confederacy. These total figures do not, however, give a clear picture of the situation. In East Tennessee, the balloting showed that residents of that area still held to their Union principles. Of the total dissenting vote in the state,

<sup>35</sup> Dumond, *op. cit.*, pp. 509-511.

<sup>36</sup> O. P. Temple, *East Tennessee and the Civil War*, pp. 340-343; *Proceedings of the East Tennessee Convention Held at Knoxville, May 30th and 31st, 1861 and Greeneville, on the 17th day of June, 1861, and following days*. Hamilton County's delegates to the Knoxville meeting were: Monroe Masterson, Wilson Hixson, A. Selser, J. G. Thomas, I. C. Rogers, J. D. Blackford, J. D. Kenner, D. C. Trewitt, J. F. Early, F. G. Blacknall, Peter Monger, A. W. McDaniel, A. M. Cate, G. O. Cate, J. A. Matthews, John Anderson, P. L. Matthews, William Denny, A. A. Pearson, William Clift, R. C. McRee, E. M. Cleaveland, William Crutchfield, and R. Hall.

<sup>37</sup> *Senate Journal of the Second Extra Session Thirty-third General Assembly of the State of Tennessee*, p. 33; *House Journal of the Second Extra Session, Thirty-Third General Assembly, State of Tennessee*, p. 57.

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32,923 were cast in the counties of East Tennessee, only two of which gave majorities favoring secession. The results in Hamilton County were closer than in the February election but the majority still rested on the side of the Union. Two thousand one hundred and fourteen ballots were cast: 1,260 against secession and 854 for,<sup>38</sup> with Chattanooga again furnishing the major part of the secession supporters.

President Thomas A. R. Nelson of the East Tennessee Convention immediately called a meeting for June 17 at Greeneville. Three delegates from Hamilton County—D. C. Trewitt, William Clift, and S. McCaleb—sat with Union men representing all but one of the East Tennessee counties. While troop trains carrying Confederates to Virginia passed within sight of the convention's meeting place, these men of conviction still sought some way out of their dilemma, even though Tennessee had already seceded.

After earnest and at times very heated debate, the Greeneville convention adopted a series of resolutions. Included among them was one which petitioned the General Assembly of Tennessee for its consent "that the counties composing East Tennessee, and such counties in Middle Tennessee as desire to cooperate with them, may form and erect a separate state."<sup>39</sup> The state legislature appointed a committee to consider the resolutions. The committee stated its disbelief that the petition accurately presented the attitudes in East Tennessee. Events were to prove the committee wrong in East Tennessee generally, but in Chattanooga, sentiment had definitely turned away from the Union. Kate Cumming, among the most noted of workers in the Confederate military hospitals, visited the town about a year later and said, "Chattanooga was called a Union place, but I heard nothing of it, even there."<sup>40</sup>

Before Miss Cumming's stay in Chattanooga, the Union adherents had largely left. James Hood, staunch editor of the *Gazette*, who to the very end refused to compromise his Union principles, shortly

<sup>38</sup> Temple, *op. cit.*, p. 199; Hamer, *op. cit.*, II, 551. The vote in Chattanooga was 421 for secession and 51 against.

<sup>39</sup> Temple, *op. cit.*, p. 351; *Proceedings of the East Tennessee Convention* . . . pp. 27-28.

<sup>40</sup> Kate Cumming, *Gleanings from the Southland*, p. 123.

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found that his "political views were not acceptable to those of [his] fellow-citizens who then 'ruled the roost.'" Three years later, he recalled, "As early as June, 1861, a self-appointed conclave sat in judgment upon the editor . . . and nothing but the timely interference of Union friends enabled him to get away in safety."<sup>41</sup>

Other confirming evidence of the strong Southern sentiment is shown in letters penned in Chattanooga at the time. John MacMillan Armstrong wrote a friend, "There are not more than seven or eight people here who are for the Union." Shortly after, he made the statement even stronger, saying, "All here are for the Southern Confederacy."<sup>42</sup>

As had been generally true throughout the community's history, men and events far removed from Chattanooga's environs had become the deciding forces in its destiny. As the town folk analyzed the barometer of national politics, the majority ultimately took a stand with their state and the Cotton South, but only after Lincoln's call for troops. The great railroad network, which had made Chattanooga into an infant town of the "New South," in years before that descriptive term came into use, was eventually to become an important factor in the great struggle which was impending. The bright prospects which Chattanoogaans had assured themselves lay virtually within their grasp were now instead turned rudely into fratricidal war.

<sup>41</sup> *Chattanooga Gazette*, July 20 and September 18, 1864. Hood returned to Chattanooga and re-established *The Gazette* in February, 1864, when Union troops controlled the community's destiny. Another staunch Unionist, J. W. Wilder, who had lived in Chattanooga since 1853, told Andrew Johnson of an experience somewhat similar to that of Hood. "I was not driven away," he wrote, "but left sooner than I otherwise would had not a report been put in circulation that I had been influancing [sic] the Union men in the upper end of the county . . . where I have formerly resided to rebellion, and that I was a correspondent of the *New York Herald*. Having been informed by a friend of the reports being circulated I left immediately without waiting to know their effect. Being a Northern man by birth, and known in the community as a Union man, I was *watched* and suspected. When I left there was a *determined* spirite [sic] manifested among the Union men of the county to resist the demands of the Confederate Government, and the despot, Gov. Harris. William Crutchfield, and Benj Chandler, of Chattanooga were outspoken Union men up to the time I left. Col. William Clift of Soddy and Abel A. Pearson of Sale Creek were keeping the Union spirite up to a high pitch in that direction, and were about instituting a camp for the *drilling* and instruction of Union men in military exercises. Of those brave, loyal men I have heard nothing since I left."

<sup>42</sup> Armstrong, *op. cit.*, II, 4 n.





## CHAPTER X

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### *Under the Stars and Bars*

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Chattanooga, at the outbreak of war in 1861, felt secure in their location, remote, it appeared, from any prospective scene of battle. They did not understand that river and railroad were eventually to become recognized as dominant influences in strategic consideration. The Civil War was the first major conflict in which the new method of transportation of rail and steam played an important part. Because it was close to a great reservoir of patriotic Union sentiment, which dipped into Hamilton County, itself, Chattanooga was to be occasionally disturbed by flurries of unofficial war. But for the major part of the first year, the town viewed from afar the massing of armies and the torment of battle. As the fighting progressed, casualties, recruits and supplies flowed through the community by rail, and strategic plans began to include it as a military objective. The Union campaign in the west brought troops constantly closer to Chattanooga with the result that some of the bloodiest battles were fought in its environs. When the campaign then moved on and the town was left in the backwash of war under Federal hands, "the engineers and quartermasters of the army became the . . . architects" of a new community, one turned wholly to the business of war. Sutlers' tents, giant government warehouses, soldiers' huts, hospitals, and refugee camps left little evidence of the former town.

As excitement grew tense after the firing on Fort Sumter, the city authorities began to prepare the community for war. At the meeting of mayor and aldermen on April 29, 1861, special provisions were

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made "to guard the magazine." A vigilance committee was appointed "to take into consideration persons suspected of being dangerous in the community, and take such action as in their wisdom they may deem expedient." The fear and suspicion of Negroes caused the adoption of a curfew law, which prohibited them from being "abroad in the city" after 7:30 P.M. Although Tennessee had not then seceded from the Union, a special committee was sent to the governor of the state to arrange a supply of arms for the defense of the town. Preparations were also made to care for the families of soldiers.<sup>1</sup>

Like the rest of the nation, Chattanooga looked forward to a short war. Nevertheless, men in the community began to form military units, while the women undertook the patriotic chores of flag and uniform making. Some months later the local press boasted that Hamilton County, "with all her little dens of Lincolnism and dark corners of midnight ignorance," had sent thirteen companies to the Confederacy. A home guard was organized and a provost marshal appointed by the town fathers. D. M. Key, prominent lawyer, was made an assistant adjutant general on the governor's staff. Coal and iron mines in the area were turned to war production. Guano deposits, such as found in the caves at Nickajack and Lookout Mountain, were used to secure saltpeter for the manufacture of gunpowder. A local foundry cast cannon and each was named for a belle of the community. When it came time to choose a permanent capital for the Confederacy, Chattanooga's central location and its rail facilities brought attention to it, but political necessity passed it by.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Minutes of the Board of Aldermen, January 3, 1859,-May 1, 1863*, pp. 100-103. The members of the vigilance committee were: Jesse Thompson, W. L. Dugger, James S. Edwards, R. Henderson, Jacob Kunz, Thomas Webster, D. Harrington, Foster Whiteside, P. A. Mitchell, R. M. Hooke, Thomas J. Latner, and Robert Smith. The committee sent to confer with Governor Isham Harris was Mayor J. C. Warner, D. M. Key, and R. Henderson.

<sup>2</sup> *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (hereafter cited as *O. R.*), Series 1, vol. iv, p. 369. These volumes have been used as the principal source for material for the war years. Citations will be included only where it is deemed important. *Chattanooga Gazette and Advertiser*, Jan. 25, 1862. The two papers, the *Gazette* and the *Advertiser*, were combined in September, 1861, under the editorship of W. L. Scruggs and Henry S. Hill.

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The result of the Battle of Bull Run, fought in July, 1861, encouraged the Confederates, but the spirit of the Greeneville Convention was still alive in East Tennessee. In the upper portion of the valley, Congressional elections were held in August. Representatives were chosen for the Federal Congress, where Andrew Johnson retained his seat as senator, as though East Tennessee was unaffected by the state's having become a member of the Confederacy. Earlier, an emissary had been sent to seek aid from the authorities in Washington, with the warning that the area would soon be occupied by Confederate forces unless Federal troops were sent to it. A scheme had been evolved by which loyal East Tennesseans would organize to assist an invading expedition from Kentucky. The bridges on the railroads were to be burned to prevent a Confederate countermovement. When this was outlined to the Federal authorities by East Tennessee's representative, it was approved by President Lincoln, Secretary of State Seward, and General George B. McClellan, and money was furnished to finance the local effort. Thus, "sentiment, politics and strategy [were] mixed up in a grand scheme."<sup>3</sup>

Without relation to this plan, Union men gathered at a Cumberland Presbyterian camp ground on Sale Creek in the north end of Hamilton County under the leadership of William Clift. Clift was then sixty-seven years old and had lived in the county for more than a quarter of a century. He was one of the county's largest landowners and before 1861 was the commander of its militia. An outspoken opponent of secession, he had supported Douglas for President and had been one of the most extreme delegates to the East Tennessee conventions. His position and reputation combined to make him the logical leader of the Union men in the Chattanooga area.

The reason for the gathering of the Unionists under Clift was their claim that oppressive measures were being exerted against them by Confederate sympathizers and that efforts were being made to impress them into the Confederate Army. Determined in their resistance, the Unionists and their leader did not wait for assistance from or join with any other groups of Federal sympathizers. As a consequence,

<sup>3</sup> Temple, *East Tennessee and the Civil War*, pp. 367-373; Coulter, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

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the activities in which they became engaged are locally called Clift's war.

Cooler heads among the Union group did not wish for such isolated and hurried action. They worked to achieve some sort of accord between Clift and the local officials. Before it could be accomplished, however, some 300 to 400 Confederate sympathizers from Hamilton and neighboring counties moved against Clift's camp. This was the first approximation of organized military action in the area in the war. Friends of Clift hurriedly persuaded him to meet with a representative of the state's military authorities, and an agreement, called the Crossroads Treaty, was reached September 19, 1861. Its terms called for the disbandment of Clift's men who were to proceed to their homes, having been assured that "no act of oppression" would be allowed against them and their families while they continued "in the peaceable pursuits of [their] several domestic occupations."

When news of the agreement spread through the area, the *Cleveland Banner* joyfully announced: "Old Clift, down in Hamilton, who has been rather obstrepulous [sic] for a few weeks, we learn, has cooled down and concluded to 'ground arms' and demean himself like a loyal citizen hereafter. Sensible conclusion that, and come to just at the nick of time, because it would have been a pity to disgrace the scaffold with such an old imbecile as he has proved himself to be."<sup>4</sup>

Both Confederate and Federal authorities understood the importance of East Tennessee, although its strategic position was not perceived by all as clearly as was stated in an editorial in the *Richmond Dispatch*: "If that country be given up and East Tennessee in consequence lost, the empire of the South is cut in twain, and we become a fragmentary organization, fighting in scattered and segregated localities, for a cause which can no longer boast the important attribute of geographical unity."<sup>5</sup> Authorities in Washington minimized the strategic geographic location. Their argument, as stated by General McClellan, was: "The best strategical move in this case will be

<sup>4</sup> J. S. Hurlburt, *History of the Rebellion in Bradley County, East Tennessee*, pp. 66-72.

<sup>5</sup> Frank Moore, ed., *The Rebellion Record*, III, 7-8.



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that dictated by the simplest feeling of humanity. . . . For the sake of these East Tennesseans who have taken part with us I would gladly sacrifice mere military advantages; they deserve our protection and at all hazards they must have it."<sup>6</sup>

An invasion of East Tennessee from Kentucky was consequently insisted upon by the Union leaders. As was often the case in the early part of the war, they did not understand the difficulties which might lie in the way of such an operation. The commanders in the field were in entire accord with the purposes of the campaign. They felt dubious, however, about its execution. Although their units were composed in part of East Tennesseans, who were most eager to march to the relief of their families and friends, the professional soldiers understood that it would be practically impossible to sustain a force in such an advanced position. Nevertheless, General George H. Thomas was ordered in October to proceed with his troops toward Cumberland Gap. The Confederates anticipated the move and sent General Felix K. Zollicoffer and his command into the area. On October 21, these two forces fought a small action at Camp Wildcat, Kentucky, in which the Federals had the better of the day. Just four days later, General Thomas received orders from General W. T. Sherman, who had been appointed to the command of the Department of the Cumberland, calling off the advance. Intense despair descended upon the Tennesseans who were with the advance units.

William Blount Carter, who was the liaison between Washington and East Tennessee, had meanwhile slipped back into his native area with plans and funds. Out of contact with the supposedly advancing Federal troops, he did not know that the invasion orders had been canceled and continued to seek civilian recruits to carry out his part of the mission.

In the early morning hours of November 9, 1861, small groups of Union men, inspired by the possibilities of the plan, struck blows at widely dispersed railroad bridges. In some cases, they were driven off by Confederate guards, and at one place, they lost their matches. However, they successfully destroyed five bridges on the East Ten-

<sup>6</sup> O. R., Series 1, VII, 468. For convenience, no gradation of generals' rank is given.

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nessee and Virginia, the East Tennessee and Georgia, and the Western and Atlantic railroads. Two spans over Chickamauga Creek, just east of Missionary Ridge, went up in flames that night, and Chattanooga was cut off from Knoxville and Atlanta by rail. Action had been added to words, and the midnight of war descended upon East Tennessee.

The failure of the military to support the efforts of the East Tennessee Unionists left them defenseless and alone, and the Confederates immediately took retaliatory measures. Men were arrested and exiled because of their Union sympathies. Those who could be associated with the bridge burnings were, by order of Confederate Secretary of War Benjamin, "to be tried summarily by drum-head court-martial, and if found guilty, executed on the spot by hanging."

When the bridge-burning episode inflamed East Tennessee, the Chattanooga authorities realized the city was "destitute of any adequate, organized force for its protection," and immediately adopted an ordinance impressing every white male between the ages of 18 and 45 into a police force.<sup>7</sup> The circumstances also caused the disregard of the Crossroads Treaty, which at best had maintained but a precarious peace. Both parties were suspicious of each other and early insisted that its terms were being violated. Now Clift openly resumed the leadership of the Union men. However, he was shortly confronted not only by the Confederate sympathizers, but by the reinforcements they received from the organized army.

Colonel Sterling A. M. Wood with the Seventh Alabama regiment of volunteers arrived in Chattanooga on November 14. This first detachment of troops to be stationed in Chattanooga was soon joined by others. At once Wood moved some 650 of his men by steamboat up the Tennessee to a point near the camp where Clift and about 500 men had rendezvoused. Their improvised post bragged of one homemade cannon, which had been constructed out of an old iron pipe.

In the movement from the river toward the camp, the Confederate force encountered what it assumed to be a portion of Clift's con-

<sup>7</sup> City of Chattanooga: *Minutes of the Board of Aldermen, January 3, 1859-May 1, 1863*, pp. 113-114.

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tingent. After an exchange of fire, in which several men were wounded, the only casualties in Clift's wars, it was discovered that the supposed opponents were Rhea County home guards on the same mission. After identification and apologies, they all moved on together and found Clift's camp deserted. Some of the Unionists were already on their way to Kentucky to enlist, while Clift and others hid in the mountains.

Colonel Wood returned to Chattanooga the night of November 16, and wrote in his report to General Braxton Bragg the following day:

This morning have moved the regiment out to the burned bridges, 15 miles, so as to get out of the way of whiskey, and to encamp among the Lincolnites. When I arrived . . . a Tennessee regiment without arms was just arriving. All in Confusion; a general panic; everybody running up and down, and adding to the general alarm. I issued an order taking command; put the town under martial law; shut up the groceries; forbade any exit, by railroad or otherwise, without a permit from provost-marshal; had every avenue guarded; arrested about twelve persons who were talking Lincolnism before I came . . . I have relieved all our friends in this country. All were alarmed; all are now resting easy. I have run all the Lincolnites.

Colonel Wood also made a report to Secretary of War Benjamin, in which he took it on himself to suggest that 500 infantrymen or one regiment stationed at Chattanooga for instruction "can keep this part of the country perfectly quiet. They can also guard the Government provisions at this point."<sup>8</sup>

Apparently, the authorities at Richmond believed that the effect of Wood's action against the Unionists under Clift was sufficient warning to them, for he and his troops were withdrawn in December. Life in Chattanooga settled down again into something approximating an ordinary pattern, although more uniforms could be seen upon the streets and more supply wagons passed through the town. The bridges were repaired and trains again moved normally. The advertisements of the stores carried by the newspapers showed little influence of the war, although some items had begun to rise sharply. Whisky had jumped from 26 to 35 cents, as quoted in January, 1861,

<sup>8</sup> O. R., Series 1. IV, 234, 247-250.



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to \$1.00 and \$1.25 per gallon in February, 1862. Salt had risen in the same period from 50c to \$4.00 a bushel, while the price of coffee, which had been quoted at 17 to 19 cents a pound, was listed as scarce at 80 cents a pound.<sup>9</sup>

The variety of merchandise offered by some of the stores was rather surprising. Included in the advertisements of the local newspapers for February 6, 1862, there were fine wines and liquors, while a furniture dealer was still offering "coverlets or spreads, large and stylish, from an extensive manufactory in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania." Land was being offered at public sale under authority of the courts to satisfy judgments against individuals who had departed the community, apparently under the exigencies created by the war. The newspaper, itself, showed an effect of the conflict. It was printed on brown paper, which the editor hoped would soon be unnecessary.

The feeling of security in Chattanooga, which followed the successes over the Unionists of East Tennessee, was comparatively short-lived. Early in February, 1862, Federal troops initiated the first phase of the campaign to clear the Mississippi Valley. In short succession, Forts Henry and Donelson fell, followed in another week by the abandonment of Nashville by the Confederate forces. Chattanooga had for the first time an experience with the refugees and chaos which are the consequence of military defeat. At the time of the evacuation of Nashville, according to Major Charles W. Anderson, Quartermaster of Transportation at Chattanooga, "The seats and aisles of all the cars arriving at Chattanooga were literally 'packed' with refugees; the platforms were crowded also, and numbers were seated on the steps, clinging to the hand railings for safety. The weather was cold, and all cars from over the mountain were covered with frozen snow."

Amid the confused excitement, Anderson was given an even greater task when he received from General Albert Sidney Johnston a telegram which ordered: "Prepare as best you can for the reception of some thousand or twelve hundred sick and convalescent soldiers from this Army and from the hospitals at Nashville. They will be

<sup>9</sup> *Chattanooga Advertiser*, January 24, 1861; *Chattanooga Gazette and Advertiser*, February 6, 1862.



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sent forward as fast as cars can be supplied." Major Anderson had no government funds with which to purchase materials at Chattanooga, or troops to carry out any plans. He turned in desperation to the residents of the town, who rallied to his assistance. Three buildings were commandeered and a force of Negro men and women were given the task of making them clean and usable for their new purpose. Fuel was gathered and arrangements were made for any of the sick and wounded who were unable to walk. Bread was contracted for and other supplies purchased. Each soldier was to be given bread and coffee, as soon as the trains arrived, from temporary stands erected in the depot.

"When the first train arrived with some three hundred on board," Major Anderson's account continues, "they were in a most pitiable condition. They had been stowed away in box and cattle cars for eighteen hours, without fires, and without any attention other than such as they were able to render each other. Tears filled the eyes of many at the depot when these poor fellows were taken from the cars, so chilled and benumbed that a majority of them were helpless. Two other trains came the following day with men in the same condition. Three soldiers were found dead in the cars, one died in the depot before removal, and another died on the way to the hospital.

"The removal of these soldiers from the hospitals at Nashville was a military necessity; but why they were sent, unaccompanied or preceded by a proper corps of surgeons, medical supplies, and hospital attendants, I never knew. It was eight days after their arrival in Chattanooga before I was relieved of responsibility for them. In that time, six more were buried, and the number of deaths would have been far greater, but for the attendance of Chattanooga physicians, among who I specially remember, Dr. P. D. Sims and Dr. Milo Smith. It was not until General Floyd's Division reached Chattanooga that the hospitals were taken charge of by any army surgeons." <sup>10</sup>

One great difficulty which troubled Major Anderson was the fact that beds were not available, and the men had to lie on the floor.

<sup>10</sup> C. W. Anderson, "After the Fall of Fort Donelson," in *Confederate Veteran*, IV, 289-290.

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Carpenters were given the task of putting together cot frames as fast as possible. All the brown cotton cloth in town was secured to cover the cots and to make bed sacks. The next large problem was to secure the seamstresses for the necessary amount of sewing. Here Major Anderson was able to enlist the assistance of a prominent refugee, Mrs. Ben Hardin Helm. Mrs. Helm was the wife of a Confederate general, who later lost his life at the battle of Chickamauga, and the sister-in-law of President Abraham Lincoln.

Mrs. Helm, years later, told the story of her experiences in the trying days at Chattanooga. After describing her own adventures escaping from Nashville, she said:

The refugees came from the trains into the little dingy reception room [at Chattanooga] to wait, sometimes for hours, for a room, looking so worried, with baskets, bundles and dilapidated valises surrounding them. Sometimes there would be a mother with a sleeping child in her arms, and others on the hard floor, with little or nothing to eat, ennuied to death. As they waited, I would go in, with brass thimbles, needles and threads and cotton sacks on my arm and inquire if there was anyone among them who would sew a little on the cots so much needed for the suffering soldiers. Every fagged woman would brighten up at the idea of being useful, and sew diligently until time for them to continue their journey. A great deal was thus accomplished. Among the ladies who passed through I remember Miss Henrietta Johnston, daughter of General Albert Sidney Johnston, and his daughter-in-law, Mrs. William Preston Johnston, on their way to Virginia, who willingly lent helping hands. A lady in the hotel helped greatly, I am so sorry I cannot remember her name—I went to her room one morning to cut out the sacks; the little . . . room, combined with the poor food I had tried to eat for breakfast, made me faint. There was no stimulant at hand, so Mr. Brooks, after tearing around the hospital in great fashion, found a man with a bottle of Hostetter's Bitters, which without the ceremony of adding water, they poured down my throat. It would have resuscitated the dead. I think we cut out about twelve hundred sacks.<sup>11</sup>

These hastily improvised hospitals were the first experience of Chattanoogans with an activity which continued through the war. After the fall of the river forts and the evacuation of Nashville, the

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 290.

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main Confederate Army retired to Mississippi and thus left only Muscle Shoals and the mountains as the principal protections of Chattanooga on the west. Some had believed these natural barriers would render the town virtually inaccessible to attack from that quarter. But General Edmund Kirby Smith, who had succeeded General Zollicoffer in command of East Tennessee, after the latter's death in action, was not so confident. He reported to Richmond that Chattanooga was virtually defenseless should it be attacked. General Albert Sidney Johnston, in command of the Western Department of the Confederate Army, also perceived the danger and reported on March 5 that he had sent General John B. Floyd, onetime Secretary of War in Buchanan's cabinet, with 2,500 troops to defend the town.

On March 11, Floyd reported that, after a "long and prosperous march," he and his men had arrived in Chattanooga three days before. They were all in "good health and excellent spirits." Chattanooga, he pointed out, was a vital point because it commanded important passes into Alabama and Georgia. But his force was insufficient to meet the need. At least 6,000 men should be stationed there to make it invulnerable. Generals Johnston and Kirby Smith still feared an attack from Nashville, and special instructions were given that the approaches to Chattanooga be carefully guarded. The stores accumulated in the town were to be moved to Atlanta.

The Federal commanders, however, had different plans, although in them were certain diversionary efforts which involved Chattanooga. The major emphasis was placed on striking the Confederate concentration at Corinth. To prevent Confederate reinforcements from the Southeast, General Don Carlos Buell evolved a plan which was to be put into execution by troops under General Ormsby B. Mitchell, who was to move toward Huntsville, Alabama, and if possible to take and hold that point. There was, however, an additional feature of the plan which was to lead to one of the most spectacular exploits of the war. This involved an expedition, composed of soldiers in civilian clothes and led by the Federal spy, James J. Andrews, deep into the Confederate country.

The Confederates, however, did not wait for a Federal movement against them in the main theater of action, but took the initiative



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themselves. Consequently these Northern efforts had no influence upon the Battle of Shiloh, in which the Federal forces defeated the Confederates on April 6-7. Four days later, General Mitchell reported the success of his movement. He held Huntsville and had "at length succeeded in cutting the great artery of railway communication between the Southern States." A day later, the little group of men under Andrews seized a locomotive and cars on the tracks at Big Shanty, now Kennesaw, Georgia.

On Saturday, April 12, 1862, Chattanooga was a scene of chaos and panic. That morning, the news was received of Mitchell's capture of Huntsville, Alabama, a little less than one hundred miles away. This was interpreted as the opening phase of a movement against the community. Hurriedly, many of the citizens began to gather their belongings for a quick departure. The Western and Atlantic authorities co-operated by running extra trains South, which were crowded with refugees. That afternoon the telegraph operator at Chattanooga was startled by an amazing message from the conductor of the daily train from Atlanta: "My train was captured this A.M. at Big Shanty, evidently by Federal soldiers in disguise. They are making rapidly for Chattanooga, possibly with ideas of burning bridges in their rear. If I do not capture them in the meantime, see that they do not pass Chattanooga."

The correspondent of the *Atlanta Southern Confederacy* vividly described the ensuing confusion when this word was made public. "Quick as thought," his dispatch printed April 18 read: "it was heralded over town penetrating to every part of this diversified city, that the Yankees had possession of the road; that all the bridges from here to Dalton were burned; that Cleveland, Tennessee, had fallen into the hands of the enemy; and that they were within a few miles of Chattanooga." With the Federals believed to be west, south, and east of town, with no exact knowledge of the strength of the supposedly attacking forces, or of what had been the fate of friends who, but a few hours before, had entrained for the South, Chattanooga was at their wit's end. The able-bodied men were hastily organized for duty, while all types of vehicles were used to convey people to the countryside and mountains.



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There was no relief from the tension until news was received that the train captured by the raiders had been overtaken near Graysville, Georgia, about twelve to fifteen miles from Chattanooga. Even then, there was the necessity to organize posses to hunt down the bold raiders who were still at large in the area.

The great railroad raid had been thoroughly planned.<sup>12</sup> The men who were detailed for the mission gathered at Shelbyville where they purchased civilian clothes and scattered in groups of two or three with instructions to meet at Marietta, Georgia. They were advised to say if they were questioned that they were from Fleming County, Kentucky, on their way to join Confederate regiments.

They made their way with difficulty through the mountains and valleys to Chattanooga, where they entrained for the meeting place. William R. Pittenger, who was one of the group, recorded his experiences in detail. He and his companion reached the Tennessee across from Chattanooga in the midst of a storm. The owner of the horse ferry was fearful of a crossing at that time, but finally agreed to put the travelers on the other shore. The two prospective raiders found the way laxly guarded, to their surprise, and lolled around the depot after purchasing their tickets without being questioned for several hours while awaiting their departure on the train. The local people were much excited over the advance of General Mitchell, and they were also eager to discuss the Battle of Shiloh. Other members of the raiding party were at the station, and all joined in the talk about the new and perplexing direction the war had taken.

The train journey south was uneventful, Marietta was reached about midnight. The men registered at the hotel and promptly went to bed. Early next morning a conference was held at which Andrews gave them instructions about their duties. They were to buy tickets to various stations along the way, as it was feared that so many going to a single destination might arouse comment. If anyone attempted to interfere, they were warned they were not to use firearms unless it became absolutely necessary. Some last minute objections were

<sup>12</sup> Andrews had planned the raid originally for March but had been prevented from carrying it out. Later, an argument developed between General Buell and Mitchell as to the credit for the idea.

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voiced, but Andrews insisted on carrying out the mission. "Boys," he said, "I tried this once and failed, now I will succeed or leave my bones in Dixie." His courage was contagious and all promised to do their share.

At the call by Conductor W. A. Fuller for breakfast at Big Shanty, the members of the party kept their seats, while the other passengers and members of the train crew hurried to the eating place. The raiders were disturbed by the number of soldiers who were in view, but Andrews by his calm demeanor settled their fears. The engine and three boxcars were quickly uncoupled from the remainder of the train. Two men, accompanied by Andrews, swung on the engine, named the *General*, while the rest found places in the cars. The throttle was immediately opened and the shortened train moved northward.

The train crew jumped up from their breakfast and ran to the track. As they watched in startled amazement, they began to question soldiers, who had looked upon the proceedings with bland indifference. Conductor Fuller interpreted the action as an attempt by conscript soldiers to escape service. He immediately started to run after the train. He thought the engine thieves would abandon it as soon as the open country was reached. Others telegraphed Atlanta that the train had been stolen, and then set out after Fuller.

Hardly was the *General* out of sight of the station before it surprisingly began to slow down. The engineer and fireman, who had been chosen for their tasks because they were professional railroad men, discovered that the dampers had been closed for the breakfast stop, and hurriedly opened them. Andrews took the opportunity to cut the telegraph wires and the party again started on its way.

Andrews was thoroughly informed about the schedule of the road. He knew where they would meet southbound trains. He relied on his knowledge and his ability to dissemble, should any suspicion be aroused among railroad employees encountered along the way. His explanation of the odd train, which was running on the schedule of the daily northbound passenger train, was that it was an ammunition special. Dressed in a frock coat and wearing a beaver hat, his appearance impressed the railroad men, who accepted without ques-

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tion the story he told of his important task of conveying needed ammunition to the hard-pressed armies of the Confederacy. Periodic stops were made to take up rail, cut telegraph wires, and to pick up wood for the locomotive.

The greatest mistake the raiders committed was their failure to destroy the little engine, the *Yonah*, which they passed on a siding near Cartersville. Fuller was a determined man and had two helpful allies in his engineer and the foreman of the railroad's shops. Their dash on foot ended when they found a "pole-car," which was being used by a gang of track workers. This car had no means of propulsion but had to be pushed or poled, tasks which were divided among the pursuers, who picked up several recruits. They received a bad spill when they failed to see at one place that a rail had been pulled up, but they put the car back on the track and were away again. After the weird chase of about ten miles on their clumsy conveyance, they were pleasantly surprised to find the *Yonah* with steam up. With high hopes, they turned it onto the main track, and strained the little engine to the limit. The thirteen miles to Kingston were covered in but sixteen minutes.

Andrews found that his knowledge was of less avail than he hoped. The extra trains which were dispatched that day out of Chattanooga caused an unexpected and vexing delay at Kingston. Nevertheless, his calmness gave no indication of his dilemma. Finally, the way was cleared and the raiders dashed on, just in time, for only four minutes later, Fuller and his aides arrived on the *Yonah*.

Fuller immediately took one of the regular engines and went on in pursuit. In the meantime, the raiders had encountered another southbound train, but Andrews's convincing presence and story allowed them to move on with but little delay. When Fuller's group met this train, they changed engines again. Pushing the train to a siding, the cars were uncoupled, and they proceeded on the engine, *Texas*, which was operated in reverse.

Andrews knew the pursuit was close behind, so he pressed on speed. The nine miles between Adairsville and Calhoun were covered in seven and one-half minutes. Pittenger reports, "In the box-car we were thrown from side to side and jerked about in a manner which



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baffles description." One of the men who rode the engine said it "rocked and reeled like a drunken man, while we tumbled from side to side like grains of popcorn in a hot frying-pan. . . . A constant stream of fire ran from the great wheels. . . ."

Rain had begun to fall, so that all bridge-burning efforts were in vain, and the pursuing group was so close that attempts to tear up rails were unsuccessful. There was not time to secure wood, so the sides and floors of the boxcars were fed into the firebox. Crossties, which had been thrown aboard for use for fuel, were dropped in an effort to block the track. In desperation two cars were uncoupled successively and pushed toward the onrushing *Texas* in the hope that they might derail it. Each time, the pursuing engineer slowed to a speed where he could engage the cars without danger and pushed them out of the way at the nearest siding. The last car was set afire and uncoupled on one of the bridges, in the hope that it would set ablaze the barnlike cover.

All efforts failed to interrupt the pursuit. Fuller, when he passed through Calhoun, stopped long enough to pick up a telegraph operator, whom he dropped at Dalton to send the message which so startled Chattanooga. He feared that his luck might run out at the tunnel, but nevertheless boldly pushed the *Texas* through it. The raiders had grown discouraged and were afraid that the countryside had been alarmed. All of them were clinging to the racing *General* which was fast running out of water and fuel. Realizing that the game was up, Andrews fed all his papers and belongings into the firebox, and warned his followers that each was on his own. The engine was slowed so they could jump off. Before abandoning it, the engineer put it in reverse, in the hope that it might wreck the *Texas*, but the result was the same which had marked every similar effort.

Although the men scattered over the countryside, one by one they were captured. As each was brought in, he was questioned at the post headquarters in Chattanooga which was in the Crutchfield House, directly across the street from the depot where they had lingered so hopefully just a few days before on their way south. They were put in irons and marched to the town jail where they were placed in a common cell with runaway slaves and East Tennessee Unionists



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who were charged with aiding the enemy or bridge burning. Some of the raiders were tried, and eight of them, including Andrews, were ultimately hanged in Atlanta, where the group was moved when a Federal expedition against Chattanooga was feared. Eight others escaped and the remaining six were finally exchanged as prisoners of war.<sup>13</sup>

The presence of General Mitchell at Huntsville was a constant threat to the Confederate position at Chattanooga. His advanced position, however, was a concern also to the Federal command. He was advised that if attacked by a strong force he should retire after burning the bridges at Bridgeport and Decatur, inasmuch as "the railroad would hardly be a proper line of communication against Chattanooga at any rate."<sup>14</sup> General Kirby Smith, who was still in command in East Tennessee, was equally disturbed about the Confederate position at Chattanooga. He advised General Daniel Leadbetter, in command at that point, to hold out as long as possible in the event he was attacked. Some of the few rifles available were to be sent for his unarmed troops, and he was told to make a "judicious distribution" of the guns by arming only the companies on the flanks. The men in the center could continue to be "armed with the country weapons."

Late in the afternoon of June 7, 1862, a Federal force under General James S. Negley, who was operating under Mitchell, made its appearance on the north bank of the Tennessee across from Chattanooga. It opened fire upon the Confederates with artillery. The batteries of the two contending forces carried on a duel across the river until darkness put an end to it. The next morning it was resumed and

<sup>13</sup> O. R., Series 1, X, 630-639; Pittenger, *op. cit.* Pittenger's account is a detailed narrative of this dramatic episode. The two locomotives are still preserved. The *General* is at the Union Depot in Chattanooga and the *Texas* is in Grant Park, Atlanta. The bodies of the eight men, who were hanged in Atlanta, were removed after the war to the National Cemetery at Chattanooga.

The six men who were exchanged reached Washington March 25th, 1863. In a ceremony, Secretary of War Stanton awarded them the first Congressional Medals of Honor to be issued. Each man was given \$100 in cash and was presented to President Lincoln. Later, 13 others were also given the Medal of Honor. *The Medal of Honor of the United States Army*, pp. 7-8, 108-109.

<sup>14</sup> O. R., Series 1, X, part 2, 118-119.

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continued for several hours. Typically, the Union forces reported great damage done, while the Confederates claimed that the action resulted in no harm. From the military standpoint, the operation was a minor raid; to Chattanooga, it was the first taste of real war. The excitement among the citizens was intense.<sup>15</sup>

The physical damage was slight, but the raid made evident the danger in which the whole of East Tennessee constantly stood. General Kirby Smith pointed out to the Richmond authorities that it was

<sup>15</sup> D. M. Key participated in this action. In a letter to his wife, written June 10, 1862, he described the scene: "In my last I believe I told you that the cavalry of the enemy and perhaps other forces were on the opposite bank of the river. On the morning of the day on which I wrote their infantry made its appearance in range of our cannon and it opened fire upon them. This was about 5 o'clock P.M. No sooner did it find them three batteries of the enemy artillery opened on our batteries. . . .

"The cannon played on each other from then till dark the sharpshooters of both armies in the meantime firing at each other across the river. Night ended the conflict. We had 3 men wounded and none killed. The wounded will get well. Our folks, it is said, killed one Colonel and one Captain and some four or five others. The next morning Maj. Genl. Smith having arrived we were ordered to move from our camp near Col. Brabsons on to Cameron Hill and to support our batteries. This we did about 9 o'clock A.M. At 9:12 o'clock the cannon of the enemy again opened upon our camp near Brabsons and on the town generally.

"They threw shells and balls all through Market Street and over the town and far beyond the Crutchfield House. Our guns remained in perfect silence Gen. Smith having ordered them not to fire until he ordered them to do so. The enemy ceased firing about 12 o'clock and commenced a hasty retreat. They are said to have crossed Walden's Ridge and to be marching up Sequatchie Valley.

"Our Cavalry has crossed the River and been sent in pursuit. The enemy are said to have numbered 7,000 by the most reliable accounts. Some put them at 15,000. On this side we had at the commencement of the firing one artillery Co. and Regiment of Cavalry besides my own command and some cavalry. On Sunday, notwithstanding they thundered their cannon on the town and camps. No one was so much as scratched. Several houses were hit by their balls, but no considerable damage was done. No notice was given for women and children to leave, still most of them left without telling. They threw shot and shell all over the camp we had occupied near Brabsons, but fortunately for us they had fired after we left it. In short the enemy fled in haste, having done very little damage. They robbed and stole everything belonging to citizens on the other side of the River, took all Southern men prisoners and carried them off with them.

"We are still on Cameron Hill without tents or baggage. We roll up on the hill side and sleep as we can having nothing in the world but bread and meat to eat. Yet the boys do not complain and seem in fine spirits." Key Collection.

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impossible for him to hold with but 5,000 men a line extending from Chattanooga to Cumberland Gap. This was not a voicing of fear of a theoretical double attack, as a Federal expedition against the vulnerable Gap coincided with the operations to the south at Chattanooga. Kirby Smith was at his wits' end, as rumors of attacks jumped back and forth from Chattanooga to northeastern Tennessee. His request for needed reinforcements had to be subordinated, however, to the more important movements of the Shenandoah Valley campaign and the Seven Days. At the same time, Buell, over-all commander of the Union forces in the area, felt as insecure in his movements against East Tennessee as did the Confederate general in its defense.

The headquarters of Buell's forces were at Huntsville, which appeared on the map as such a short distance from Chattanooga that the authorities in Washington could not understand his delay in moving against that point. Secretary of War Stanton wired General Halleck, Buell's superior, on June 30, 1862, that the President was displeased "with the tardiness of the movement toward Chattanooga." On the same day Lincoln, himself, telegraphed that nothing should be done "to give up or weaken or delay the expedition against Chattanooga. To take and hold the railroad at or east of Cleveland, in East Tennessee, I think fully as important as the taking and holding of Richmond."<sup>16</sup> Lincoln, on the evidence of this communication, had learned something that his army commanders as yet had apparently failed to comprehend: the importance of rail transportation to the strategy of war.

While Buell remained at Huntsville, General Bragg, commander of the Confederate Army of Tennessee, concentrated his forces at Chattanooga. The first contingent of Bragg's troops arrived early in July and by the end of the month, the general, himself, was again in Chattanooga, after an absence of twenty-four years.<sup>17</sup> The move of Bragg's forces was not for the relief of Chattanooga, alone. Buell's lodgment at Huntsville, according to Bragg's interpretation, "threatened the very heart of our country, and was destined, unless checked

<sup>16</sup> O. R., Series 1, XVI, part 2, 75.

<sup>17</sup> Bragg, it will be recalled, had been in Chattanooga for the removal of the Indians.



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immediately, to sever our main line of connection between the East and West."<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, it was essential that the enemy be removed from his control of the "important provision country of Western Alabama, Middle Tennessee, and Kentucky." As soon as Bragg reached Chattanooga, he sent a typical apology to Kirby Smith for his "unjustifiable intrusion" on the latter's department, but he said that orders required it and was "satisfied no misunderstanding" would occur.

At Bragg's invitation, Kirby Smith conferred with him, and they agreed upon a co-operative campaign in Kentucky. While the conferences were being held, the Confederate forces, which were still arriving, scattered over the area about Chattanooga, seeking comfortable camp sites. The cavalry was constantly engaged in raids and reconnoitering. General John H. Morgan and Nathan Bedford Forrest harassed Buell's communications, with Forrest causing the greatest excitement by his capture of Murfreesboro in mid-July, where he destroyed the rail facilities.

On August 28, Bragg crossed the river at Chattanooga and scaled Walden's Ridge with a force of at least 27,000 men. Kirby Smith had moved shortly before according to the agreement. Within a few days, Buell, who was still at Huntsville, moved his force toward Nashville, where it could deal with an attack upon Middle Tennessee or Kentucky, as he had been unable to determine in which direction the Confederates were headed. Chattanooga was left with only a garrison force of Confederates; its immediate fear vanished as the men of war marched northward.

The residents and soldiers stationed at the town, however, watched with some feeling of apprehension for news about the progress of Bragg's army. Fortunately a few weeks before a new newspaper had been started. For several months, there had been no local paper and rumor had largely taken the place of news. Franc M. Paul, who was a clerk of the Senate in the first secession legislature, had been detailed to convey the Tennessee archives to Chattanooga, when Nashville and Memphis fell in turn to the Federals. He was a printer

<sup>18</sup> *O. R.*, Series 1, XVI, part 1, 1089.



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by trade, and saw immediately that Chattanooga "was the very point at which to establish a journal for circulation in the army."<sup>19</sup>

Paul rented equipment and established the *Chattanooga Rebel*. The first issue appeared about August 1, 1862. The paper made an effort to furnish news of the community to the residents, and carried advertisements of goods available in the stores, as well as notices of military orders and restrictions. But the greatest interest was in reporting the war. Camp correspondents, who signed their communications with such noms de plume as "Mint Julep," filed reports of intimate doings in their units as well as accounts of engagements fought. Special items were contributed by Charles H. Smith, popularly known as "Bill Arp." This well-known humorist continued to send in correspondence until he "runaged" from the Yankees.

Sometime in November, Paul employed a young newspaperman, whose association with the paper brought it increasing prominence. Henry Watterson<sup>20</sup> had been attached to Forrest's staff, but the cavalry officer agreed with Paul that Watterson could perform "more efficient service for the cause of the South with the pen than with the sword." Shortly after, Watterson took his place as the principal writer on the *Rebel*, which became "a great favorite, not only with the army, but throughout the South, and subscribers poured in more rapidly than the orders could be filled with the restricted facilities at the command of its publishers."<sup>21</sup> Years later, Albert Roberts, who served as Watterson's editorial associate and contributed correspondence under the pseudonyms, "John Happy" and "Grapevine Telegraph," said that the "collection or manufacture of enough news at a frontier point of military operations," to fill the paper required many "ingenious expedients." And at times, the paper was used by the Confederates to confuse the Federal intelligence.<sup>22</sup>

When the Army of Tennessee moved north in late August, 1862,

<sup>19</sup> Tennessee State Historical Commission and the Tennessee Historical Society: *Tennessee Old and New*, II, 273. The volume carries an account of the *Chattanooga Rebel*, prepared by Franc M. Paul.

<sup>20</sup> This is the celebrated "Marse Henry" Watterson, for so many years editor of the *Louisville Courier-Journal*: *Chattanooga Rebel*, November 16, 1862.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 274-275.

<sup>22</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, September 18, 1895.

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the headquarters remained at Chattanooga. The commandant of the post, General Sam Jones, was busily occupied with repairing rail lines and bridges, and providing for their protection. He was also responsible for gathering supplies to be forwarded to the army in the field. In December, it was reported that an armory, established six months before, had issued 18,000 small arms, which were undoubtedly only repaired and put into serviceable form by the 25 to 35 armorers.<sup>23</sup> The local streets also demanded attention. The editor of the *Rebel* noted that in the repair crews were "commissioned officers and privates of the Confederate Army, Union men, Yankees, negroes and every other kind of prisoner."<sup>24</sup> General Jones also had to provide additional army hospitals. The Crutchfield House was taken over and its name changed to the Ford Hospital. Another was the Newsom Hospital, which "was composed of the upper part of several large warehouses, each one opening into the other and a current of air blew right through them." The ladies of the community established others at their own expense, and the members of the Methodist congregation took up the church carpets and cut them into blankets.<sup>25</sup> Across the river, a large camp was opened to house convalescents and stragglers until they were sent on to join the army in the field.

The problem of caring for the sick and wounded was most vexing, as improvised methods had to be relied upon. One of the most prominent volunteer workers in the army hospitals was Kate Cumming, an Alabaman who sought to be always at hand where her services might be helpful. She came to Chattanooga about September 1, 1862, to help prepare for the harvest of war which would result from the advance of the army.

In her reminiscences, *Gleanings from the Southland*, Miss Cumming tells of her journey by train from Mobile to Chattanooga, accompanied by two friends, who were also volunteer nurses. As they neared their destination, they found that a regulation had been issued requiring special papers to go to Chattanooga. Theirs were not in order, but they exercised their feminine wiles upon the guard

<sup>23</sup> *Chattanooga Rebel*, Dec. 18, 1862.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, September 11, 1862.

<sup>25</sup> Cumming, *op. cit.*, p. 85; *Chattanooga Rebel*, Sept. 30, Oct. 27, Nov. 25, 1862.

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and were allowed to continue on their way. On arrival, they encountered more vexing red tape:

We went to the Crutchfield House at Chattanooga, and were informed we could not procure a room without a special pass from the provost-marshal of the place. We were in a dilemma now, as we were not allowed to walk even a square without this pass, so could not get out to procure one.

The clerk of the hotel kindly informed us that we could wash our hands and faces in the parlor and eat breakfast. For this gracious concession we were properly thankful. After waiting for some time for water to be brought in, I ventured to ask a white girl, who was sweeping the hall, to bring us some, as we wished to get rid of the dust by which we were covered. This *femme de chambre* coolly informed us we could get none until the next morning, and, as if to add insult to injury, deliberately walked into the parlor and vigorously plied her broom to the carpet, enveloping us in clouds of dust.<sup>26</sup>

After breakfast some of the party were taken by a back road, to avoid the guard, to the post surgeon's office, where they secured the papers which enabled them to move about the streets with no trouble. Miss Cumming remained at the hotel, "to meditate upon the strangeness of the time."

The hospital at which Miss Cumming worked accommodated about 600 patients. Typically the hospitals were ill cared for by army authorities. There was but one small stove on which to cook, and Miss Cumming remarked upon the sad need for proper food. She sought money from friends in her home town, Mobile, and the ladies of Chattanooga put on a series of "tableaux entertainments" to raise funds. For the most part, the volunteer nurses had slaves and some free Negroes as assistants. Occasionally a convalescent soldier acted as an aide, but as Miss Cumming pointed out, they had to go back to active duty usually about the time they were trained.

All the time and strength of Miss Cumming and her associates were devoted to their tasks. When some of the "first ladies" of Chattanooga called upon them socially, the ladies "were not a little surprised when we told them, most emphatically, that we did not expect to visit." However, Miss Cumming in her account expressed gratitude

<sup>26</sup> Cumming, *op. cit.*, p. 82.



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"for all the kindness shown us by the good people of Chattanooga."

At times, when the worries and labor were almost beyond bearing, she would go to the third story of the hospital, where "the view from the windows was grand. To the right was the Tennessee in its circuitous route meandering through fertile fields and meadows; facing us was quite a rise, dotted with handsome mansions, surrounded by lovely gardens of shrubbery; and to our left was Lookout Mountain, looking like a lion couchant, frowning down upon the placid waters of the Tennessee, which flows around its base. Many a time, when worn out physically and mentally, have I forgotten my trials in gazing with rapture upon this lovely scene."<sup>27</sup>

Naturally the lives of Chattanoogaans were greatly modified by the presence of the military, and their attention was held by news from the front. Sometimes, it was good, as in the instance of the Second Battle of Bull Run; again, it was disturbing as that of Antietam or the retirement by Bragg and Kirby Smith to Tennessee after the Battle of Perryville. During the second half of 1862, privations were numerous although spirits were at times lightened by social entertainment. For a period, while Bragg's concentration was being affected and after the columns marched out, the citizens were restricted in their actions. It was not until September 20 that the *Rebel* noted a gradual increase in the number of ladies on the streets, as it was no longer necessary for them to have permits. This, the editor observed, "betokens a return to civilization, which many visitors to Chattanooga began to think had never existed here."

Water was scarce, as the community had but one well. It was "constantly surrounded by struggling parties who had frequently to wait a most undesirable length of time for 'the next turn.'" Peanut or sweet potato coffee was brewed as a substitute for the imported product, no longer procurable. The lack of liquids was relieved for some when in November a supply of whisky was received from Middle Tennessee. "It put a war-like spirit in everyone," observed the *Rebel*, "for we see nothing but treating and re-treating from morning till night." The provost marshal soon stepped in, however, to control the sale of this merchandise. He ruled that only grocers

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 89-90.



## Under the Stars and Bars

and druggists should sell it, and they were required to have permits.

The newspaper failed to be published for short periods, when there was no paper, and matches were apparently difficult to obtain, as the *Rebel* published a recipe for making them at home. Some of the residents had to give up their houses "at the command of the government." In the period while the Crutchfield House was used for hospital quarters, there was no place for visitors to find lodging. Any such were warned by the *Rebel* to bring their own bedding and provisions, as "we have no place in which to sleep or feed them."

Some social activities were carried on. Hardly had Bragg's main force crossed the Tennessee than plans for an excursion to Nickajack Cave were made. When the band of the Hamilton Grays was home on furlough, it furnished martial music. By mid-November, the Central House, "a good hotel," was open for the comfort of travelers. The local belles could then be joined by visiting ladies in entertaining the troops.

In the surrounding country, social events sometimes surmounted the difficulties created by war. This is evidenced by the wedding held at the home of a "Mr. Reynolds," February 17, 1863, on Walden's Ridge twenty-two miles from Chattanooga. The ceremony was climaxed by an all-night dance, "to which all parties were cordially invited."

An eyewitness later wrote that he accompanied some of his friends to the affair. He found the guests "to be composed of 'complicated ingredients.' I do not suppose that the history of the world contains such a rare case of universal *concord* being the result of universal *discord*. The party was composed of 1st, Rebel and Union citizens; 2d, Rebel and Union soldiers; 3rd, Rebel and Union deserters; 4th, Rebel and Union spies; 5th, Rebel and Union bushwhackers.

"Scarcely a harsh word was uttered during the whole night; all danced together as if nothing was wrong, and parted mutually the next morning, each party marching off separately.

"Considering the great hatred existing between the different parties it is marvelous that bloodshed was not the immediate result."<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup> *Chattanooga Gazette*, March 6, 1864.

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One of the grocers advertised the welcome news that he had just received a shipment of brown sugar, dried apples, rice, molasses, chewing tobacco, and cigars. But business in general was bad. The *Rebel* began to advertise that Chattanooga should be made "the great workshop of the Confederate States." It was the logical place to locate plants for the manufacture of arms and munitions, the paper claimed. It was the center of a radiating network of railroads, and in the neighborhood there were "immense beds of coal and iron." Properly utilized these were capable "of making it the Pittsburgh of the South." Chattanooga's citizens were true to the Confederacy. Furthermore, the paper stated, under the stress of the times, the government should not purchase from private firms but should go into the supply business.<sup>29</sup>

Attention was redirected to military possibilities when the retirement of General Bragg's forces seemed destined to bring war again to Chattanooga, even though his new lines stretched across Middle Tennessee within ten miles of Nashville. In November the *Rebel* carried a dispatch of the appointment of General William S. Rosecrans to succeed Buell. The editor was somewhat disturbed by the news and prophesied that a Federal offensive might be expected. About two weeks later, on December 4, General Joseph E. Johnston, who had been given command of the Confederate forces in the West, arrived in Chattanooga and established his headquarters. On the 11th, President Davis visited the town, accompanied by his aide, Colonel Fitzhugh Lee.

Together with General Johnston, Davis planned to review the troops at the front. They boarded "an elegant new carriage" at the Union Depot. "A splendid brass band in attendance struck up 'The Bonnie Blue Flag' and broke out into 'Dixie,' the lively strains of which fell upon the ear as the train was sweeping around the base of giant Lookout."

The holiday season of 1862 in Chattanooga was, consequently, a period of mixed merriment and apprehension. On Christmas Day, the citizens performed their civic duty by re-electing Dr. Milo Smith mayor for the ensuing year. To celebrate the New Year, Tom Crutch-

<sup>29</sup> *Chattanooga Rebel*, September 24, 30, 1862.

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field invited friends to a party, where eggnog, "made out of pure Jamaica rum" was served. While they relaxed and made good company, a message was received from Governor Isham G. Harris at Murfreesboro that Federal and Confederate troops were again engaged in bitter struggle. The Battle of Stone's River was on.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Details about the community have been gathered from issues of the *Chattanooga Rebel* for this period.





## CHAPTER XI

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### *The Battle of Chickamauga*

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THE first news in Chattanooga from Stone's River was of a Confederate victory. This was apparently confirmed when several thousand Federal prisoners were detrained and marched through the streets to a prison camp. There were warnings, which enraged the citizens, by the prisoners that the Federal Army would soon be in Chattanooga as conquerors. But it was not until January 8 that the *Rebel* commented: "The retrograde movement of our forces in front of Murfreesboro again leaves a portion of Middle Tennessee within the enemy's lines. The extent of this unfortunate circumstance cannot yet be ascertained; but it is well for our people to be prepared for the worst."

The line to which the Confederates retired included McMinnville, Manchester, Shelbyville, and Tullahoma, with Braggs's headquarters at the latter. The Federal concentration was about Murfreesboro, where Rosecrans established his headquarters. Here the two armies settled down to bind their wounds and prepare for the year ahead.

The principal interest of the people of Chattanooga was in watching for news of movements at the front, although they could not discern from the brief dispatches what plans might be in the process of development. Amateur strategists speculated upon the future and "manufacture fact where none exists," the *Rebel* said. The town had changed greatly under the necessities of war. There were "few traces of its former comfort, neatness and social or moral qualities

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left," a visitor wrote in January, 1863.<sup>1</sup> The hospitals were more crowded than ever after the battle, but as time passed even those institutions were relieved of the major part of their burden. This gave the opportunity for some social recreation. Kate Cumming, despite her original declaration to confine herself entirely to the serious business at hand, found time to ride horseback to the top of Lookout Mountain to picnic on the grounds of the Whiteside Hotel.<sup>2</sup> More frivolous individuals decided a "soiree dansante" was in order, and as though to give it a quality of official appearance, it was planned in honor of General Joseph E. Johnston. Unfortunately the general found his duties more pressing than did those who sought to honor him. He sent his apologies, but this did not hinder the plans, nor did the heavy rain which fell on the night of the entertainment. The gentlemen had to roll up their pants to carry the ladies to the dance floor from the ambulances and wagons in which they arrived. The hall was gaily decorated with cedar boughs and Confederate colors. For the time, all forgot the worries of war.<sup>3</sup>

Except for occasional raids and skirmishes, the armies continued to face each other in Middle Tennessee. As usual in periods of inaction, pickets fraternized and exchanged items of barter and gossip, while the generals were busy with plans for future campaigns. In the western war, these were to include two principal phases: one, the effort of the Federals to clear completely the Mississippi River, and the other, the attack by Rosecrans upon Bragg's force in Middle Tennessee. The latter was also planned as a campaign against communications for included in it necessarily was the important railroad center of Chattanooga. For the river operation, Grant with the Army of the Tennessee was sent into Mississippi with his objectives the towns of Vicksburg and Port Hudson. The Confederate Army there was under the direct command of General J. C. Pemberton. Both his army and that of Bragg were under the department command of Johnston whose headquarters were still in Chattanooga.

Grant's army, widely separated as it was from major Federal forces,

<sup>1</sup> *Chattanooga Rebel*, Jan. 31, 1863.

<sup>2</sup> Miss Cumming was told that it was possible with good glasses to see seven states.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, March 13, 1863.

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was a constant source of anxiety to the authorities in Washington. The fact that Johnston was in command of the whole Confederate force west of the mountains added to their worries. It was feared that reinforcements would be sent from Bragg in Middle Tennessee to Pemberton, which, as the Federal commander in Memphis wired Rosecrans, "would be disastrous."

At the same time, Andrew Johnson, then military governor of Tennessee, was not letting Washington forget the plight of the East Tennesseans. If there could be no general movement for their relief, the Tennesseans in the army should be brought together and sent into the area. He said, "The oppression and inhumanity inflicted are indescribable and must be redressed."<sup>4</sup>

So Rosecrans and his army sat between these two increasing pressures. There was but one answer, according to Washington, and General Halleck expressed that on March, when he urged Rosecrans that it was "extremely important that you give the enemy in your front plenty of occupation." In the meantime, Halleck continued his plans with General Ambrose E. Burnside, then in command of the Department of the Ohio, for a raid into East Tennessee. Grant, aggressive as always, proceeded to develop his campaign against the important Mississippi river ports.

Rosecrans, however, was not easily inspired. He was an old army man and, like many of them, was not satisfied with less than what he considered the necessary forces and supplies to undertake an offensive movement. He was particularly anxious about cavalry in the spring of 1863. He was in country new to him. Furthermore, the enemy had against him the able cavalry leaders, Morgan, Wheeler, and Forrest, who harassed him constantly. Horses were a constant source of friction between Rosecrans and Quartermaster General Meigs, who from Washington, could not conceive the necessity and repeatedly stated that all that could be done was being done.

Johnston and Bragg were confronted by equally important and demanding circumstances. As usual, arms and other supplies were at a premium among the Confederates. Criticism was being directed at Bragg from many sources. It appeared even to his own subordi-

<sup>4</sup> O. R., Series 1, XXIII, part 2, 372.



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nates that he was incapable of taking advantage of the opportunities which his own tactical plans afforded him. President Davis twice importuned Johnston to ascertain the truth of the reported lack of confidence in Bragg. He even went so far as to tell Johnston in a confidential message to supplant Bragg in command of the army in the field while continuing as departmental commander. For various reasons Johnston avoided this responsibility, possibly because he believed, as he informed Davis, that the criticism was declining. "I have seen the whole army," he reported. "Its appearance is very encouraging, and gives positive evidence of Gen. Bragg's capacity to command. . . . To me it seems that the operations of this army in Middle Tennessee have been conducted admirably. . . . I believe . . . that the interests of the service require that Gen. Bragg should not be removed."<sup>5</sup>

Johnston and Davis were as disturbed about the possibility of Federal exchange of reinforcements as the group in Washington was of Confederate. However, the Confederates had an additional worry. They knew that the Federals outnumbered them. Both fears are expressed in a communication from Johnston to Davis on March 18: Bragg and Pemberton, he said, "may be attacked simultaneously. If not we cannot tell which first." Only one thing was certain, and that was that with the coming of spring military operations on a large scale would start again. As the *Rebel* editorially pointed out in late March, the lull was about over. With a flare of patriotism, the editor wrote: "Up with the flag! Roll the drums! Glisten, bayonet, in the Spring sun, and off with the rags and tags of Winter sloth."<sup>6</sup>

In early April, both armies began preliminary preparations. On April 9 Johnston, having settled for the time being the situation at Bragg's headquarters, as he thought, was ordered to Mississippi to take command of the troops in the field. He took with him 3,000 men from Bragg's forces. Although Bragg was still under Johnston, the latter's departure placed more responsibility immediately upon the commander in Middle Tennessee.<sup>7</sup>

About the same time, Rosecrans planned a raid against Confeder-

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 623-633.

<sup>6</sup> *Chattanooga Rebel*, March 24, 1863.

<sup>7</sup> J. E. Johnston, *Narrative of Military Operations*, p. 172.



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ate communication, supply, and manufacturing centers between Atlanta and Chattanooga. This, the famous Streight raid, proved unsuccessful. The men who participated were taken from the ranks of the infantry and were mounted on mules, because it was thought they would prove better than horses in the mountainous country. The service was a new one for men and animals, but the chief cause of failure was the pressure of the Confederate "wizard of the saddle," Forrest, who captured the entire force well within the Confederate lines.

But Rosecrans' failure to initiate a general offensive became more and more perturbing to the Federal leaders in Washington. On May 28, President Lincoln, who apparently understood the implications of the military situation, wired the general: "I would not push you to any rashness, but I am very anxious that you do your utmost, short of rashness, to keep Bragg from getting off to help Johnston against Grant." Rosecrans replied immediately, "I will attend to it," but after consultations with his subordinates, he decided that the risk was too great at that time and did not move. His inaction brought quick response from Washington. Halleck expressed first the "great dissatisfaction" felt in the capital city and then on June 16 wired: "Is it your intention to make an immediate movement forward? A definite answer, yes or no, is required." Rosecrans was still not to be hurried and telegraphed the same day: "In reply to your inquiry, if immediate means to-night or to-morrow, no. If it means as soon as all things are ready, say five days, yes." Finally, on June 24, the Federal Army was set in motion before dawn for a general advance.<sup>8</sup>

Campaigning in this theater was not easy. Roads were few and their condition was generally miserable. Although the Confederates had an acquaintance with the terrain, they made public their ignorance of details when they advertised in the press for any good maps of Tennessee.<sup>9</sup> The condition of the railroads was not always satisfactory and they needed to be guarded constantly against raiding parties. The mountains made operations extremely difficult. General Bragg noted this clearly by observing: "It is said to be easy to defend a mountainous country, but mountains hide your foe from you, while

<sup>8</sup> O. R., Series 1, XXIII, part 2, part 1, p. 10.

<sup>9</sup> *Chattanooga Rebel*, June 21, 1863.

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they are full of gaps through which he can pounce on you at any time. A mountain is like the wall of a house full of rat-holes. The rat lies at his hole, hidden, ready to pop out when no one is watching." He then pointed to the Cumberlands and asked, "Who can tell what lies hidden behind that wall?"<sup>10</sup>

Forested mountains made advance just as difficult as defense. Small things—flies, chiggers, poisonous plants—vexed all. The problem of securing food for men and animals was very real. The Federal General John Beatty wrote, as he moved into the Cumberlands, that for a time blackberries and milk furnished his breakfast, dinner, and supper. The movement of so many men through the area created similar anxiety among the civilians and the military. In a long diary entry, Beatty summarized:

Our soldiers have been making a clean sweep of the hogs, sheep and poultry on the route. For the rich rebels, I have no sympathy, but the poor we must pity. The war cuts off from them entirely the food which, in the best of times, they acquire with great labor and difficulty. The forage for the army horses and mules, and we have an immense number, consists almost wholly of wheat in the sheaf—wheat that has been selling for ten dollars per bushel in Confederate money. I have seen hundreds of acres of wheat in the sheaf disappear in an hour. Rails have been burned without stint, and numberless of fields of growing corn left unprotected. . . . The season's crop of wheat, corn, oats and hogs would have been of utmost value to the Confederate army; when destroyed, there will be nothing in middle Tennessee to tempt it back.<sup>11</sup>

Browned by the Southern sun and covered with dust from the war-trampled roads or hampered by the heavy rains, typical of the season and area, the marching soldiers always welcomed the sight of running water. But at times, it was hard to find, particularly on the mountain plateaus, as the columns concentrated along the narrow winding roads. When the troops had to cross the mountain ridges, progress was extremely slow. A mile and a quarter was occasionally the sum total of a day's advance, for the steep trails required that

<sup>10</sup> R. U. Johnson, and C. C. Buel, eds., *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, III, 641 n. The section on the Chickamauga Campaign was contributed by General D. H. Hill, to whom Bragg made this comment.

<sup>11</sup> John Beatty, *Memoirs of a Volunteer*, pp. 217-218.

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the men assist the horses in dragging the cumbersome wagons, ambulances, and cannon up and down the mountainsides.

As Rosecrans started his troops from Murfreesboro, Burnside sent a raiding party of cavalry into East Tennessee from Kentucky to do whatever damage it could, but principally to burn railroad bridges and in other ways to cut the line between Knoxville and Chattanooga. Bragg became very exercised about the move of Rosecrans, which apparently was directed against the Confederate right, and warned his cavalry commanders to send him immediate information about its development. Very soon, he realized that the move was a general advance, so he decided to fall back across the Cumberland Mountains and the Tennessee River to the vicinity of Chattanooga. By July 7, all the Confederate troops had crossed the river and Bragg's headquarters were again located in the town.

When the news reached Chattanooga that Bragg had evacuated his Middle Tennessee line, the *Rebel* carried the headline, "THE CRISIS IS UPON US." As Bragg's army reached the community, the utmost confusion was experienced. Kate Cumming described the turmoil of "troops coming and going, wagons hurrying past, and everything else pertaining to a large army." The noise, she said was bad for her patients, and the streets around the hospitals were barricaded.<sup>12</sup> Refugees from Middle Tennessee arrived continuously, and their desperate search for local shelter and transportation farther South to supposed safety added to the confusion. Even a newspaper, the *Huntsville Confederate*, was a "refugee" and was printed in Chattanooga at the time.<sup>13</sup>

Rosecrans dislodged Bragg from Middle Tennessee with an exceptionally successful maneuver. He played upon the Confederate fear of a co-ordinated move with Burnside. Feinting first to the right, Rosecrans swung the weight of his force to the left and hit the Confederate line approximately ten miles to the northeast of Tullahoma. As Bragg evacuated his position in front of the Federal advance, Rosecrans, in typically cautious fashion, followed slowly through the incessant rains. His army moved in four corps. General Thomas

<sup>12</sup> Cumming, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

<sup>13</sup> *Chattanooga Rebel*, July 24 and 26, 1863.



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L. Crittenden commanded the Twenty-first; General Alexander McD. McCook, the Twentieth; General George H. Thomas, the Fourteenth; and General Gordon Granger, the smaller Reserve Corps. The Confederate organization consisted of two infantry corps, one commanded by General Leonidas Polk and the other by General William J. Hardee, a cavalry corps under General Wheeler with an additional division under General Forrest.

Bragg's defensive measures were carefully worked out. The cavalry was posted over a long stretch of the river with Wheeler given the responsibility south of Kelly's Ferry, a few miles west of Chattanooga, and Forrest from that point north. Deserters were sent into the Federal lines in large numbers with various stories of Bragg's intentions and the force he had at hand. The *Rebel* was also used in this campaign to conceal Bragg's real aims. Its editors had been requested to use stories of reinforcements arriving in large numbers. It was impressed on them how much the press could assist the army inasmuch as the Federals constantly read it for news about Confederate movements.<sup>14</sup>

It took time for preparation and more pressure from Washington to start Rosecrans after the completion of his movement against Bragg's Tullahoma line. From the information secured, the Confederates assumed that the Federal crossing of the Tennessee would more likely be to the north of Chattanooga, where Burnside's cooperation was possible. As a part of a feint in that direction, Colonel John T. Wilder, in command of a Federal brigade of mounted infantry, reached the Tennessee across from Chattanooga on Friday, August 21, and immediately opened fire with artillery upon the town. It was the same position from which Negley had fired the year before.

The attack coincided with the day which Jefferson Davis had named for fasting and prayer. Soldiers and civilians were assembled in church, and a visiting minister was praying when the shells began to fall. Henry Watterson, who was in attendance with the young lady who later became his wife, described the circumstances:

The man of God gave no sign that anything unusual was happening. He did not hurry. He did not vary the tones of his voice. He kept on

<sup>14</sup> O. R., Series 1, XXIII, part 2, 885.



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praying. Nor was there panic in the congregation, which did not budge.

That was the longest prayer I ever heard. When it was finally ended, and still without changing a note the preacher delivered the benediction, the crowded church in a most orderly manner moved to the several doorways.

I was quick to go for my girl. By the time we reached the street the firing had become general. We had to traverse quite half a mile of it before attaining a place of safety.

Within a short time Confederate batteries began to reply. The artillery duel continued at intervals until late afternoon. A couple of steamboats, tied up at the landing, were reported by Wilder to have been damaged, but Confederates stated that the Federal fire was generally ineffective.<sup>15</sup>

From that time on Federal troops maintained a constant observation of Chattanooga from the hills beyond the river. The town which Wilder reported as "pretty well fortified," was transformed into a place of impending battle. Every train departing carried its quota of civilians. The *Rebel*, according to its own report, was "about the only public institution left in the almost deserted and once proud martial city of Chattanooga."<sup>16</sup> Hospital patients were moved south. The young Reverend T. H. McCallie, who planned to stay in town, whatever the future might bring, cut false doors in the top of a wardrobe so he could reach the attic of his house, where he stored food and valuables. Some of the residents with railroad connections were able to secure cars in which they set up housekeeping. They refuged in these caravans, keeping in advance of the armies by moving whenever they could secure a locomotive.<sup>17</sup> Industrial plants were dismantled and the machinery sent south.

The *Rebel* continued operations as long as possible. The last few issues, which were hardly more than broadsides, were run off on a hand press. The town was under continuous artillery bombardment at the time, and the three men—the two editors and a combination

<sup>15</sup> O. R., Series 1, XXX, part 3, 122-123; part 2, XXX, 136; part 4, XXX, 524; Henry Watterson, *Marse Henry*, II, 309.

<sup>16</sup> *Chattanooga Rebel*, August 25, 1863.

<sup>17</sup> A. M. Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

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printer and pressman—who remained behind to get out the paper moved into the abandoned quarters of the Bank of Tennessee, so its vault could be used as a “bombproof.” The other equipment was loaded into boxcars and moved to Marietta, Georgia, where publication was resumed.<sup>18</sup>

When the Federal Army moved from the Cumberlandds to the river, the concentration was to the south of Chattanooga, with the major crossing planned in the vicinity of Bridgeport and Stevenson, Alabama. Unopposed by the Confederates, the troops made their way across the river beginning August 29 and moved on toward the “green-mountain wall, whose summit, apparently as uniform as a garden hedge, seemed to mingle with the clouds,” as it was described by John Beatty’s facile pen. Rosecrans assumed that Bragg would continue to retire into Georgia. As his force moved across Sand Mountain into Lookout Valley, it was consequently widely separated. McCook, who was ordered to cross Lookout Mountain at Valley Head, Alabama, was approximately twenty miles from the crossing of Thomas’s corps at Trenton, Georgia. Thomas, in turn, was twenty-five miles from Crittenden, who skirted the end of Lookout Mountain at Chattanooga.

Bragg, when cavalry reports built up a picture of the Federal movement for him, withdrew from Chattanooga southward. General Simon B. Buckner had joined forces with him, leaving Knoxville to be occupied without effort by Burnside. Again Bragg used his deserter technique, and the various headquarters of the Federal Army were flooded with reports that the Confederates had retired to almost every point of Georgia from Macon to the Tennessee line. The Federal cavalry bore out Rosecrans’ fears, as expressed to Halleck, by failing to provide information on the enemy’s movements.

An advance unit of Crittenden’s corps entered Chattanooga on Wednesday morning, September 9. Colonel Smith D. Atkins, who

<sup>18</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, September 18, 1895; Tennessee State Historical Commission, etc., *op. cit.*, II, 277-279. The *Rebel* continued to refugee and was known throughout the Deep South as the “Chattanooga Rebel on Wheels.” Finally, in April, 1865, a Federal cavalry force caught up with it and captured its plant at Selma, Alabama.

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was in command of the 92nd Illinois Mounted Infantry, reported the circumstance in detail:

At about 9:30 A. M., my advance, under Captain Dunham, entered Chattanooga, but, under my order, did not push up to the river bank, but followed the retreating enemy by Rossville on the La Fayette road 4 or 5 miles, but owing to the jaded condition of his horses, could not overtake them. I followed with my regiment down the mountain, and immediately sent out scouting parties southward, knowing it to be the line of the enemy's retreat from the columns of dust plainly visible as I came down the mountain. I then went with my regiment to the railroad depot in Chattanooga, and at 10:00 A. M. my regimental colors were planted on the third story of the Crutchfield House, the first to float over the evacuated town.<sup>19</sup>

The Reverend Mr. McCallie, who was present to observe the occupation by the Federal troops, also reported the incident: "Chattanooga never saw a more eventful day. . . . The Confederate cavalry withdrew about 9 o'clock in the morning, and about 10 A.M., the streams of Union soldiers, the first we had seen, dressed in blue, came pouring in. Not a child was harmed, not a woman insulted, not a man killed. . . . Here was a peaceful occupation of a city without any violence or outrage of any kind."<sup>20</sup>

McCook was the first of the Federal commanders to reach the top of Lookout Mountain. Perhaps, for that reason, as from the eastern brow he had a view which displayed the distances and the rugged country, he was also apparently the first to have misgivings about the separation of the Union Army. He immediately sent Rosecrans a sketch of the country as he perceived it and a table of distances, and remarked that he was more than twenty miles from Trenton, where Thomas was. This information apparently had little effect upon Rosecrans, as one of his subordinates remarked a few days later that the commanding general "was totally uninformed as to the character of the country in the vicinity and of the position, force and intention of the enemy. . . ."<sup>21</sup>

Primarily this was attributable to a lack of accurate maps, which

<sup>19</sup> O. R., Series 1, XXX, part 1, 453-455.

<sup>20</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, July 1, 1903.

<sup>21</sup> O. R., Series 1, XXX, part 3, 567.

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even the Confederates, as we have seen, were anxious to secure. More important, though, was the failure of the Federal Cavalry to keep headquarters informed. Repeatedly during the campaign, Rosecrans begged his principal cavalry commander for information, but with no success. Thomas had to use civilian couriers to communicate with McCook, as no mounted troops were available. The Confederates, on the other hand, were well served in this particular.

The terrain is a difficult one. Lookout Mountain stands approximately 1,000 feet above the valley floor, which is ribbed by ridges and hills. Both sides of the mountain rise abruptly, and the roads over it were "rough, stony and [ascended] in steep zig zags." The gaps, through which the roads ran, are seldom dips in the mountain itself, but instead are breaks in the rock escarpment which forms a precipitous rim along the mountaintop.

About thirty miles south of Chattanooga, a spur called Pigeon Mountain veers off from the eastern side of Lookout Mountain and extends northeastwardly for a distance of about eighteen miles. The acute angle between Pigeon and Lookout Mountains forms McLemore's cove, which is about six miles wide at the point where Pigeon Mountain ends. The south end of Missionary Ridge extends into the cove where it disappears. Chickamauga Creek, which gave the ensuing battle its name, originates in the head of the cove and meanders through it in a generally northeastward direction on its way to the Tennessee River.

The area was sparsely populated as it was but thirty years away from Indian occupation. Little of the land was farmed, and the remainder was left to grow at will, with cedar thickets and tangled undergrowth crowding the larger hardwoods and pines. It was typical September weather in the area. The hot, dry air had parched the countryside, and the roads were inches deep in dust.

McCook moved on across Lookout Mountain and camped near the little community of Alpine, Georgia, on its eastern slope. Thomas, in the meantime, worked his way up and down the mountain, with the men laboring every inch of the way to get wagons and guns over the trails which defied the efforts of horses and mules, and bivouacked in McLemore's Cove. Crittenden, a part of his force having occupied Chattanooga, moved on with the remainder to Ringgold, Georgia,



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a point approximately fifteen miles southeast of Chattanooga.

From the information Rosecrans had, it was his belief that Bragg had retired toward Rome or Dalton. Bragg, however, had evacuated Chattanooga with two ideas in mind. He would gain time for reinforcements to arrive, and by confusing the Federal intelligence he hoped to catch the enemy in detail as it moved across Lookout Mountain. When Rosecrans ordered Thomas to move directly across McLemore's Cove toward Lafayette, to gain the road south, Bragg saw his opportunity to engage that corps isolated from support. Thomas was the center of the "extraordinary dispersion" of the Federal Army, separated by twenty-five miles and Pigeon Mountain from McCook on the south and by at least as many miles from Crittenden on the northeast.

Bragg's moment appeared at hand. To realize it, he ordered Thomas attacked on his flank from the north and frontally by another force from the east, as the Federals moved across the cove. Surrounded by mountains as he was, Thomas could have been destroyed had the plan been effectively executed. Generals D. H. Hill and T. C. Hindman failed to carry out the attack, since they did not have full confidence in the commanding general's ability, nor were they sure about his knowledge of the enemy. When Thomas's advance encountered the Confederates at Davis's Cross Roads, he immediately recognized his exposed position and drew back to the foot of Lookout Mountain. His trains were sent for safety to the top of the mountain.

The Federal commanders realized that Bragg's concentration warned of an impending general engagement. Consequently, a Federal counterconcentration was ordered. McCook, at Alpine, found that there was no practical way across Pigeon Mountain, so he had to cross and recross Lookout Mountain in order to reach Thomas in McLemore's Cove. Crittenden, at Ringgold, marched to the southwest to join the other corps. Again, Bragg saw a possibility to catch an isolated section of the Federals and ordered Polk to move to intercept Crittenden. Polk failed in this assignment for the same reasons that Hill and Hindman had in the move against Thomas.

On September 16, Rosecrans established his field headquarters at Crawfish Springs, now the town of Chickamauga, Georgia. Orders

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were sent to the commanders that the troops were to be issued three days' rations, and their pockets and ammunition belts were to be filled. The Federal concentration had been accomplished. The three corps were grouped in the north end of McLemore's Cove and Union preparations for battle were virtually complete.

Having failed in his plan to defeat the separated corps of the Federal Army in detail, Bragg also proceeded to organize for battle. The reinforcements, which he was expecting, were on their way from Virginia. Two divisions under General James Longstreet left the army of Northern Virginia beginning September 9 to join with Bragg in the effort to destroy Rosecrans' army. A terrific burden was placed upon the railroads by the movement of some 7,000 troops with their artillery for about 700 miles. The route was a roundabout one, through North and South Carolina and Georgia, then up from Atlanta over the W. & A. to Ringgold. Time was pressing also, as the two armies near Chattanooga were daily growing closer to battle.

As soon as Crittenden moved out of Ringgold to effect his junction with Thomas and McCook, Confederate troops moved in, determined to hold the little town as a convenient point of disembarkation for Longstreet's force. The first contingent reached Ringgold on September 18 under General John B. Hood, who was still carrying his arm in a sling from a wound received at Gettysburg. Thus the first major use of railroads to move a large body of troops such a distance to join in a general engagement was successfully accomplished.

The arriving Confederates were met by Forrest's cavalry and were led to a place of bivouac on the west side of Chickamauga Creek. On the way from Ringgold, Forrest fought spiritedly with Federal cavalry placed to guard the road and its bridges. The latter were driven across the stream toward the Lafayette-Chattanooga road. They were followed by a brigade of Confederate infantry which bivouacked near the point of crossing. The next morning, Forrest was sent to reconnoiter the area toward which the Federal cavalry had retired. At almost the same time, Thomas had been informed of the Confederates who had crossed the creek and sent a brigade under General John T. Croxton to investigate. These forces under Croxton and Forrest ran into each other in the heavy undergrowth and the Battle of Chickamauga was on.

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For two days the conflict raged over a small area for the number of men engaged. From Chickamauga Creek on the east to Missionary Ridge on the west the distance was less than five miles, while from the Ringgold Road on the north to Lee and Gordon's Mill on the creek to the south was a somewhat shorter distance. On this field, about twelve miles away from Chattanooga, some 120,000 men, about equally divided between Blue and Gray, engaged in one of the bloodiest battles ever fought. The Lafayette-Chattanooga road was an axis upon which much of the critical action hinged. There were some other roads which connected the little dwellings and their small fields. But most of the area was in virgin forest, badly tangled with thickets of cedar, brambles, and other undergrowth. Troops frequently had to withhold their fire because of inability to distinguish friend and foe, while at other times, friend fired upon friend, or supposed friends turned out to be enemies with serious results. All fighting was necessarily at short range. Men frequently were separated from their units as the din of battle hung over this scene of natural and human confusion.

It was Bragg's plan to weight his right heavily and use his left as a hinge to force the Federals back into McLemore's Cove where the mountain walls would prevent their escape. Rosecrans misread this intention and believed that the Confederate general was attempting to get between him and Chattanooga and to retake the town. Plans on the part of both commanders were to come to naught as the battle was fought largely on the initiative of their subordinates without consideration for over-all supervision, as both army commanders soon lost any semblance of general direction.

As the battle developed on the 19th, brigades, divisions, and even regiments were thrown in without regard to larger organization. The line extended gradually, as the fighting continued, from the north-east to the southwest, with the Confederates driving from the creek toward the Lafayette-Chattanooga Road. At nightfall, action was suspended. Confederates with canteens sought water at the creek, while on the Federal side, where water was scarce, the cavalry was ordered to bring it to the troops from springs and streams. The sleep of exhaustion took men from the reality of the field, and a pale moon



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hung in the sky to aid rescue workers, as they sought out the wounded from the sleeping.

Rest on such an occasion was broken and short. Officers who had been in the saddle all day had to hold conferences and plan for the next day's fighting. Bragg rearranged his army into two wings, the right under Polk, and the left given to Longstreet. The latter had arrived on the field about midnight after his long journey from Virginia, although a large portion of his troops were still on the way and failed to get into the battle. The tactical arrangement was the same; the extreme right was to open the battle and attempt to get around the Federal left and wheel the enemy into the cove. The Federals also used the cover of darkness to prepare their lines and reassemble their forces. Thomas's corps was placed on the left, where the heaviest action was expected. His men felled trees during the night and prepared breastworks to receive the Confederate attack. Crittenden was next in line with McCook on the right. Granger continued to be stationed in reserve at the gap in Missionary Ridge above Rossville.

The attack was ordered by Bragg to begin at "day dawn," first on the right and to be followed up along the line "in succession rapidly to the left." Because of various delays the attack was not delivered until late in the morning. Although the Confederates had heard the Federal axes during the night, it was with surprise that they encountered the strong position and heavy fire of Thomas's troops. Very shortly, frontal attacks on the position were given up, and efforts made to move around the fortified line to take it in the rear. Whenever such a movement appeared to be successful reserves were thrown in by the Federals and the Confederates were driven back. These troops held their position securely until ordered from the field toward nightfall.

Longstreet heard the battle upon his right develop with growing intensity, but with typical stolidity remained hidden in the woods while awaiting the proper moment for his attack. Realizing that the battle was not progressing according to plan,, he decided upon an attack by his whole wing shortly after 11 A. M. Fortunately for him, his movement coincided with an inexcusable Federal blunder. A courier passing between the headquarters of Thomas and that of



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Rosecrans thought that he saw a gap in the line. When he reported this to the army commander, orders were immediately sent to fill it with troops. The courier was mistaken, no gap existed, but one was created when the division commander literally obeyed the orders he received. These were to close up on a division to his left despite the fact that another division stood between the two. As these troops formed in column to march to the point they had been ordered, Longstreet's assaulting Confederates reached the Federal line. They poured through the hole which had been created and crushed the flanks on either side.

The Federals to the south of the break in the line, including the commanding general, fled from the field. In his report, Rosecrans said that he tried to reach Thomas but found routed troops and heard firing so far to the left that he decided it was doubtful that even the left had held. He then retired to Rossville, but on "consultation and further reflection" decided to go on to Chattanooga "to give orders for the security of the pontoon bridges at Battle Creek and Bridgeport, and to make preliminary dispositions either to forward ammunition and supplies, should we hold our ground, or to withdraw the troops into good position."<sup>22</sup>

The road through MacFarland's Gap in Missionary Ridge at the extreme northwest corner of the battlefield was the single way of egress for the demoralized Federal troops. The confusion on it was almost indescribable. Charles A. Dana, newspaperman, who was on the field in his capacity as Assistant Secretary of War, wrote: "I rode twelve miles to Chattanooga, galloping my horse all the way, to send dispatches to Washington, and found the road filled all the distance with baggage-wagons, artillery, ambulances, negros on horseback, field and company officers, wounded men limping along, Union refugees from the country around leading their wives and children, mules running along loose, squads of cavalry,—in short, every element that could confuse the rout of a great army, not excepting a major-general commanding an army corps. . . ."<sup>23</sup>

Although to those caught in the tumultuous retreat of the troops

<sup>22</sup> O. R., Series 1, XXX, part 1, 60.

<sup>23</sup> J. H. Wilson, *The Life of Charles A. Dana*, p. 264.

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on the Federal right it seemed that the day had been irretrievably lost, men from the center rallied and took new positions on a ridge about half a mile to the rear. Horseshoe Ridge or Snodgrass Hill offered a strong position for defense, although at some points ravines provided avenues of approach. The troops were composed of many units of various regiments, brigades, and divisions. General Thomas had been caught in the retreating mob and with usual skill organized the defensive position. Despite a shortage of ammunition and the demoralization which had attended the earlier debacle, here they were able to resist the Confederate assault columns. The latter were under the command of Longstreet, who attempted to secure assistance from Bragg to carry the position in his front. When told that reinforcements were not available, Longstreet nevertheless continued his attacks attempting to reach the top of the ridge by way of the ravines.

The situation of the Union troops was desperate. Their ammunition was virtually exhausted, and they repeatedly resorted to the bayonet to repel attackers. In early afternoon, the Federal commanders were surprised to see troops approaching from their rear. It was shortly ascertained that these were the regiments of Granger's reserve corps, whose commander had marched them to the field without orders, and arrived just in time to prevent the overrunning of the Horseshoe Ridge position. This stand of Thomas prevented a complete disaster for the Federal Army. By it he won both fame and the praise of his soldiers who created for him the title, the "Rock of Chickamauga."

In the area where Polk's army faced Thomas's corps behind its log breastworks, fighting died down about noon. The troops could hear the firing and shouting from other positions on the field and imaginations ran rife as to their portent. When late in the afternoon, orders were received from Thomas to begin a withdrawal, the Confederates moved into the prepared works as the weary Federals made their way to be followed by their fellows on Horseshoe Ridge through MacFarland's Gap and back to Rossville, a defeated army. "The march to Rossville," Beatty wrote, "was a melancholy one. All along the road, for miles, wounded men were lying. They had crawled or hobbled slowly away from the fury of the battle, become exhausted,

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and lain down by the roadside to die. Some were calling the names and numbers of their regiments, but many had become too weak to do this; by midnight the column had passed by.”<sup>24</sup>

Back on the battlefield, the cheers of the Confederates rang loud and long in celebration of their victory. They assumed that the morrow would find them pressing hard upon the heels of their retreating enemy. But their commanding general was never sure of their spirit and ability, and despite the importunities of his subordinates, he made no effort to pursue and thus to reap the full results of the battle. Almost 34,000 men were casualties on the field. For the Confederates 2,389 were killed, 13,412 wounded, and 2,003 captured or missing. For the Federals, 1,656 were killed, 9,749 wounded, and 4,474 captured or missing. Many of the wounded of both armies suffered the additional torture of burning. Numerous fires broke out in the bone-dry tangle of underbrush which covered much of the battle area.

The Confederates held the field, but the Federal Army was still in being, although in a precarious position. But as long as Bragg remained inactive, its chance of survival grew. General Forrest asked the right question when he wanted to know why Bragg fought battles, unless he intended to follow up his victories.

<sup>24</sup> Beatty, *op. cit.*, p. 252.





## CHAPTER XII

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### *Beavers in Blue*

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ON that Sunday afternoon after General Rosecrans quit the field at Chickamauga, he reined up before the little Roman Catholic church in Chattanooga for a few minutes' quiet before the altar. Although the citizens who remained in town were aware of the struggle along the creek and in the woods, they had no word of its size. Soon, however, the roads were filled with fleeing men, making their way by all manner of transport which could be devised or commandeered. Disorganized and weary, they resembled a rabble rather than an army. The Reverend Mr. McCallie observed that the scene was one of utmost confusion, "almost bordering on panic." That night, the salvaged portion of the Union Army, which had held a position under Thomas on the army's left until nightfall, camped near Rossville, to continue their way into Chattanooga on the morrow. By that time, they were reorganized, but the echo of battle yells was still in their ears, and the toll of casualties was beginning to assume its enormous proportions.

Moreover the future seemed to bear no bright prospect to the men in blue. In their position at Chattanooga, the Tennessee River was to their rear, with but one pontoon bridge, a crude swing ferry and another which was horse propelled, to offer the possibility of escape if the retreat were to be continued. Lookout Mountain walled them in on the west, while Missionary Ridge rose to complete their encirclement except for the few passes through which they had escaped from the battlefield and which were now in the hands of the enemy.

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No extensive works had been prepared in anticipation of a reverse. To meet the attack of the Confederates, which was believed to be impending, houses on the outskirts of town were razed, and axes rang all night, as oaks and hickories were felled to clear the field of fire and to provide timber for abatis and other fortifications.

Although the Confederate cavalry was active everywhere, Bragg leisurely dispatched the remainder of his forces to occupy Missionary Ridge and Lookout Mountain. A general order for an attack was issued, but it was countermanded the next day. Instead, a permanent line was established by the Confederates, and the siege of Chattanooga was opened. The outer line was anchored on the Tennessee River near Raccoon Mountain and swung along the intervening valley to Lookout Mountain. From there it ran across Chattanooga Valley to Missionary Ridge and followed that elevation to its end near the mouth of Chickamauga Creek.

The Federal position soon changed from one of temporary defense to a line of permanent works. The inner line was based on the meandering river at both ends; it surrounded Chattanooga and enclosed an area of approximately one square mile. Breastworks were erected and were reinforced by redoubts and forts which were located on the high ground within the arc of the position. It was graphically described by W. F. G. Shanks, a journalist on the scene, who said: "Residences were turned into block-houses; black bastions sprang up in former vineyards; riflepits were run through grave-yards; and soon a line of works stretched from the river above to the river below the city, bending crescent-like around it, as if it were a huge bow of iron, and rendering it impregnable." The army engineers stood not on sentiment but on necessity. They "budded not an inch" from their determined way "to spare the town."<sup>1</sup>

The picket lines of the two forces reached out toward each other, beginning at the mouth of Chattanooga Creek on the west and curving through the valley in conformity with the eccentric pattern of the permanent works. Along the creek, there was an understanding that the Federal line would run along the north bank and the Confederate the south. Both armies used the stream for water, and the

<sup>1</sup> W. F. G. Shanks, "Chattanooga, and How We Held It," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, XXXVI, (Jan., 1868), 144.

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pickets, as usual under such circumstances, fraternized freely. When word of these friendly relations reached headquarters, Rosecrans issued orders to the corps commanders "to enjoin upon all your pickets that all intercourse between them and the rebel pickets, such as holding conversation, laying down their arms and approaching each other, etc., is strictly forbidden and must not be continued." He requested that they be "civil and well behaved," and said they could exchange newspapers if a commissioned officer were present. All such orders were futile, and the men continued to swap experiences and the little luxuries which camp life could afford. "Right on the eve of battle," one observer reported, "Federal pickets contentedly munch biscuit that their neighbors-in-law had tossed to them; and an examination of many a plug of that Indian weed in a picket's pocket would show the print of a rebel's teeth at one end and a 'Yankee's' at the other."<sup>2</sup>

From the heights which they occupied, the Confederates dominated the Union position. They controlled all the rail lines into the town. Their cavalry kept a constant vigil over the surrounding country. Bridgeport, the nearest base of supplies for the besieged Federal Army, was almost isolated. From their position to the west of Chattanooga, Confederate batteries and sharpshooters commanded the river, from which all steamboats had been swept. They controlled the road on the south bank of the river and could keep the one on the north under fire. Only a long sixty-mile route through the Sequatchie Valley and across Walden's Ridge could be used safely, but this was in part steep and mountainous. The heavy rains that fell converted stretches of the road into elongated mud puddles, in which mules and horses floundered, as they tried to pull the heavily freighted supply and ammunition wagons. Siege, with its strangling effects, was applied with all the vigilance at Bragg's command. With the mountains and the coming winter season as allies, he hoped to force Rosecrans into submission or to cause him to retire from his advanced position in the heart of the South. But far away in Washington, other plans were being perfected.

Scarcely had word of the defeat been received in the capitol before

<sup>2</sup> O. R., Series I, XXX, part 4, 80; Benjamin Taylor, *Mission Ridge and Look-out Mountain with Pictures of Life in Camp and Field*, p. 160.



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preparations were begun to send troops from Virginia and Mississippi to reinforce the Army of the Cumberland at Chattanooga. Railroad experts were called upon to organize the fastest movement possible from the army in the east. General Joseph Hooker was recalled to service and given command of parts of the 11th and 12th Corps. The trains were routed from Alexandria and Manassas Junction to Indianapolis, Louisville, Nashville, and on to Bridgeport. The first troops left Virginia on September 26, just six days after the defeat at Chickamauga. Twenty thousand men with the necessary baggage, wagons, and artillery were thus dispatched. The first arrived at Bridgeport by October 6. The Federals thereby duplicated the successful use of the railroads by the Confederates less than a month before.

On the same day that the first of Hooker's men left Virginia, General Sherman, in command of the Army of the Tennessee, started his troops in motion toward the besieged force in Chattanooga from their position deep in Mississippi. He used steamboats to Memphis, where he planned to entrain on the Memphis and Charleston. The determination of the Federal authorities to hold the position at Chattanooga was evident. The major concern of the planners was: Would time run short before the reinforcements would arrive? Abraham Lincoln stated the strategy in a message to Rosecrans on October 4: "If we can hold Chattanooga and East Tennessee, I think the rebellion will dwindle and die. I think you and Burnside can do this, and hence doing so is your main objective. Of course, to greatly damage or destroy the enemy in your front would be a greater objective, because it would include the former, and more; but it is not so certainly within your power. I understand the main body of the enemy is very near you—so near that you could 'board at home,' so to speak, and menace or attack him any day. Would not the doing of this be your best mode of counteracting his raids on your communications? But this is not an order."<sup>3</sup>

Those Chattanoogaans who were left within the community watched the military developments with great interest. All civil government had been suspended, and orders were issued that civilians should remain away from the defense lines. Houses and stores were con-

<sup>3</sup> O. R., Series I, XXX, part 4, 79.



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fiscated for the use of the army, and as supplies grew short the civilians suffered with the soldiers. Shanks reported: "They were forced to huddle together in the middle of the town as best they could, and many of the houses occupied by them during the siege surpassed in filth, point of numbers of occupants, and general destitution the worst tenement houses in New York City."<sup>4</sup> Some families requested permission of the Federal commander to be put through the lines to the South, while others with no similar place of refuge were sent by the Union authorities to Bridgeport and Stevenson.

The sick and wounded soldiers who were hospitalized in the community kept many of the civilians occupied in an effort to relieve their sufferings. Some were Confederate prisoners, who were in a large warehouse on Market Street. The Reverend Mr. McCallie described it as being heated by a large fire, but since there was no chimney, the cold was often preferable to the suffocating smoke. Here the pastor and his wife were seen frequently, as they and other citizens took warm soup and whatever other cheer the time permitted to the men.

The once countrylike community, with lawns and gardens surrounding every house and with a second level of green foliage in the great shade trees, grew forlorn in appearance in a few short days. Soldiers' shelters, "small dog-kenneled-shaped huts," were scattered everywhere. In siege the ax replaced the rifle as the soldier's chief tool. He would "buy, beg or steal" one from the quartermaster. With it he cut logs for cabins, brushwood and evergreens for thatching the roof, or to cover shelter tents. With the same tool mud was dug to plaster crevices. Only an Indian town of huts and wigwams, according to Shanks, could compare with such a scene. The Confederates, he said, called the Federals "beavers in blue," so hard did they work with mud and logs to provide defenses and shelters.

Wood for huts, wood for breastworks, wood for fuel, wood for pontoons—wood was the chief material of this stage of war. A saw-mill, which utilized an old engine found in one of the abandoned factories, was put into operation. It made the planks for pontoons and the roadway which the boats supported. Soon hundreds of acres

<sup>4</sup> Shanks, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

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were stripped by the army's insatiable appetite for wood, and the town lay naked.

As the autumn days grew shorter the arrival of wagon trains became a matter of real concern. Foraging parties were sent out to scour the country to bring in corn and other food for the transport animals. Most of these groups seized the opportunity to exceed their orders and to secure by theft or otherwise food for themselves. One conscientious leader of such a party bitterly complained to headquarters of these excesses. Many of the residents of the area were Unionist in sympathy he pointed out, but that was no protection. "The thieves who accompany our forage and supply trains are . . . no respecters of persons. When they discover a hen roost, sheep, or hogs, they do not stop to inquire the sentiments of the owners; neither does it concern them if they are about to take the last sheep or hog belonging to the family. They take them or it as they choose, and perhaps insult the owner if he or she urges loyalty or poverty and protests against the robbery. On the road up the Tennessee valley over Walden's Ridge, and near the foot of the mountain on the other side, almost every garden is found stripped and one will hardly discover a chicken or hog."<sup>5</sup> The countryside had been so scoured that even the cattle were starving. Those which were brought into Chattanooga for the army's use were so thin that the soldiers frequently joked that they were having "beef dried on the hoof."

The roads from Bridgeport were constantly in danger of raids by Confederate cavalry. These thin lifelines if left unmolested would have scarcely served, but the delays and losses of teams and wagons which were caused by the forays of Wheeler's ever-active forces made the problem of supply a most critical issue for the besieged men. The greatest of Wheeler's raids is still a legend in the neighborhood, where the story is that the mountain road was a trail of flame from top to bottom. Working his way first across the river and then over Walden's Ridge, Wheeler and 1,500 men reached the Sequatchie Valley on the morning of October 2. They first ran into a small wagon train which they easily destroyed. Herding the captured mules, the

<sup>5</sup> O. R., Series 1, XXX, part 4, 366-369; *Report to the Contributors to the Pennsylvania Relief Association for East Tennessee*, p. 17. This report confirms the statement of the military.

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Confederate cavalymen rode rapidly down the valley road toward Jasper. There before them they found the prey they were seeking. A great Federal wagon train, variously estimated at from 800 to 1,500 wagons, stretched from the mountain top ten miles toward Jasper, according to Wheeler's report. Eagerly anticipating their opportunity, the Confederate troopers swept the Federal guard of cavalry out of the way and proceeded toward their victims. For eight hours, they were undisturbed as they burned wagons, except for those they chose to take with them, and killed the teams.<sup>6</sup> The news was received with almost unbelief in Chattanooga, where the officers at headquarters importuned the signal stations and cavalry commanders to inform them about what had occurred. When the discouraging, accurate reports were received, it was realized that a bad situation had been made worse. The wagon train of the major part of a whole corps was lost in the action.

As supplies dwindled, rations were cut.

After the third week of the siege, [Shanks reported] the men were put on quarter rations, and only two or three articles were supplied in this meager quantity. The only meat to be had was bacon, "side bacon" or "middling," I think it is called, and a slice about the size of three large fingers of a man's hand, sandwiched between the two halves of a "Lincoln Platform," as the four inches square cake of "hard bread" was called, and washed down by a pint of coffee, served for a meal. Men cannot dig fortifications and fight very long on such rations; and the whole army was half famished. I have often seen hundreds of soldiers following behind the wagon trains which had just arrived, picking out of the mud crumbs of bread, coffee, rice, etc., which were wasted from the boxes and sacks by the rattling of the wagons over the stones. Nothing was wasted in those days, and though the inspectors would frequently condemn whole wagon loads of provisions as spoiled by exposure during the trip, and order the contents to be thrown away, the soldiers or citizens always found some use for it.<sup>7</sup>

Occasionally the quiet was punctured by exchange of artillery fire, but few shells fell within the town. The guns on Lookout Mountain

<sup>6</sup> O. R., Series 1, XXX, part 2, 722-725.

<sup>7</sup> Shanks, *op. cit.*, p. 146.



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were frequently brought into play against the Federal positions in the river bend below. General Beatty, who reported the war with a very human touch, gave one description of this frequent action in his diary.

While standing on the bank at the water's edge, peering through the mist to get a better view of two Confederate soldiers on the opposite shore, a heavy sound broke from the summit of Lookout Mountain, and a shell went whizzing over. . . . Pretty soon a battery opened on what is called Moccasin Point, on the north side of the river, and replied to Lookout. Later in the day, both Moccasin and Lookout got into an angry discussion which lasted two hours. These two batteries have a special spite at each other and almost every day thunder away in the most terrible manner. Lookout throws his missiles too high and Moccasin too low, so that usually the only loss sustained by either is in ammunition. Moccasin, however, makes the biggest noise. The sound of his guns goes crashing and echoing along the sides of Lookout in a way that must be particularly gratifying to Moccasin's soul. I fear, however, that both these gigantic gentlemen are deaf as adders, or they would not so delight in kicking up such a hullabaloo.<sup>8</sup>

The inaction of the armies gave a lot of opportunity for sight-seeing. One Confederate who made a trip to the top of Lookout reported his observations of almost the same circumstances given by the Federal general, in a letter to his wife. "It was the most sublime scene I ever witnessed; I could see the whole Yankee army and ours **almost** at the same sight," he wrote. "My eyes had not grown weary of such a magnificent sight when we were greeted by a shell from a Yankee battery on Moccasin Point, just across the river. They shelled our battery on Lookout Point about one hour. They soon shelled my old friend Alf. Davis and myself off the point. I remarked to him when he heard the whistle of a shell, did he not like to hug the ground better than his wife? He replied, 'Them things' would make anyone get down on the ground.'<sup>9</sup>

The Federals were confined largely to the small area within the defenses of the town. Whatever recreation they found had to be

<sup>8</sup> Beatty, *op. cit.*, pp. 259-260.

<sup>9</sup> O. R., Series 1, XXX, part 3, 208-210.



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devised out of the materials close at hand. The correspondents of newspapers and periodicals organized themselves into a "Bohemian Club." Their quarters were those which had been occupied before the Federal entry by Governor Isham G. Harris, whose executive offices had been in the field since the fall of Nashville. According to Shanks, the most popular quarters in the period of the siege were those of Rosecrans' Judge Advocate General. He had the "only piano which was not used for firewood or camp costs." However, his music won him less popularity than his "full larder . . . and the attraction which drew such admiring crowds to hear his songs circulated in a demijohn."

Although the Confederate troops had greater freedom of action than those of the besieged army in Chattanooga, their days were not without their share of daily complaints and disheartening reflections. The Southerners had been urged to plant more corn and less cotton, but despite this food was not bountiful for the Johnny Reb or the animals of his transport. Experience in the field brought about many interesting and ingenious expedients, particularly in the preparation of meals from the scanty rations. One, called "cush" or "slosh," was a luxury as prepared by the soldiers encamped on Missionary Ridge. "We take some bacon and fry the grease out," one of the men described it, "then we cut some cold beef in small pieces and put it in the grease, then pour in water and stew it like hash. Then we crumble corn bread or biscuit in it and stew it again till all the water is out then we have . . . real Confederate cush."<sup>10</sup>

The soldiers became amateur shoemakers. The lack of shoes was a constant source of complaint between the individual soldiers and the higher command. General D. H. Hill once expressed to his subordinate commanders his wonder that soldiers could be barefoot when 18,000 pairs of shoes had been issued to them. Yet the men were constantly without proper footwear and spent hours around the campfire trying to make moccasins from rawhide. Some of the crudely made products shrank and others stretched, while all stank and attracted flies.

As the Confederate Army sat in inaction tempers wore thin, and

<sup>10</sup> B. I. Wiley, *The Life of Johnny Reb.*, pp. 104-105.

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the old feeling of distrust among the higher officers broke out afresh. Principally this centered as usual about the commander of the army. Bragg was a well-trained, professional soldier. He was conscientious and devoted to the cause of the Confederacy. Unfortunately, limitations in his disposition made him excessively critical of his subordinates. He lacked the most important qualification of the military leader, that of imposing his will upon those who served under him. The controversies which were a consequence of his disputatious nature had a harmful effect throughout the army, as they filtered down through the ranks, constantly embroidered by typical soldier gossip.

Difficulties developed between Bragg and his subordinates almost as soon as the guns of Chickamauga cooled. Polk and Hindman were relieved of duty. The popular Forrest was ordered to turn over his troops to Wheeler and sent to West Tennessee to raise another army. These actions were soon followed by a communication to Jefferson Davis from the "general officers of the Confederate armies, now serving with the Army of Tennessee." They wrote they would be derelict in "the sacred duty they owe the country if they did not . . . ask that Your Excellency assign to the command of this army an officer who will inspire the army and the country with undivided confidence."<sup>11</sup>

This communication had the immediate result of a visit by President Davis to the army before Chattanooga. In the presence of the commanding general at his headquarters on Missionary Ridge, Davis questioned the subordinate generals on their opinion of Bragg's ability as an army commander. The common idea, expressed by all, although some were slightly embarrassed by the unusual proceedings, was that Bragg would be of greater service to the Confederacy in some other capacity than that of the commander of the Army of Tennessee. However, Bragg again weathered the storm of criticism, and was retained in command. He continued to get rid of those who had failed him in the campaign before Chickamauga by relieving D. H. Hill. Thus changes were completely accomplished in the higher ranks except for Longstreet, who despite his involvement in the controversy was left in his place.

<sup>11</sup> O. R., Series 1, XXX, part 2, 65-66.

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The Federal commander likewise sought his scapegoats. Crittenden and McCook were removed to appear before courts of inquiry. But Washington was not so easily put off as Richmond. Failure in the field and the criticism of such men as Assistant Secretary of War Dana brought Rosecrans under the same sort of consideration as Davis had given Bragg. The Federal commander, according to Dana, was "irresolute, vacillating, and inconclusive. . . . It is my duty to declare that while few persons exhibit more estimable social qualities, I have never seen a public man possessing talent with less administrative power, less clearness and steadiness in difficulty, and greater practical incapacity than General Rosecrans."<sup>12</sup>

On October 16, Washington created a new military department to include all the armies in the West except that about New Orleans and the Southwest, to be known as the Military Division of the Mississippi. Ulysses S. Grant was given command. Recommendations were made to the new commander that Rosecrans be superseded by Thomas. Two days later, Grant issued the orders for the change.

After the battle of Chickamauga, Washington made repeated requests of Burnside at Knoxville to give every assistance for the relief of the besieged army at Chattanooga. Rosecrans likewise importuned the commander at Knoxville for aid, using couriers to carry the messages. The aged William Clift, who never failed to give assistance to the Union cause, was one of these. Clift's family illustrated the division to be found within family units. Two of his sons were in the Confederate Army as were three of his sons-in-law; two sons followed him in service to the Union. On one of his missions to Knoxville in late October, 1863, the eldest Clift was captured by the Confederates. By strange coincidence, the officer who brought him in was his own son.

For one reason or another Burnside failed to support in any way the hardpressed Union Army, nor did the plans then actively in process of accomplishment include any weakening of the forces in upper East Tennessee. Grant followed his order changing the command at Chattanooga by immediately departing for the front. From Louisville he wired Thomas, "Hold Chattanooga at all hazards." The

<sup>12</sup> O. R., Series 1, XXX, part 1, 214-215.



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reply from Thomas expressed typical determination, "We will hold the town till we starve."

When Grant arrived at Chattanooga he talked to the generals and got from them their ideas about the situation. He rode over the terrain and examined the defenses. Plans were at once translated into action. On the night of October 26 some 1,800 troops were crammed into pontoons which had been built at Chattanooga. Under the cover of darkness they slipped by the Confederate positions and gained a foothold on the south bank of the river at Brown's Ferry below Lookout Mountain. On the following day the bridgehead was enlarged and the Confederate sharpshooters who had dominated the river, as Dragging Canoe's braves of old once had, were driven from their positions on Raccoon Mountain. Counterattacks by Longstreet's forces were repulsed and by night the Federals were established in Brown's Valley.

Hooker, who was held at Bridgeport after the completion of his spectacular movement from Virginia, began the execution of his part of the plan on the morning of the 27th. His men worked their way into Lookout Valley almost without opposition and by mid-afternoon on the 28th the Federal position was secure. The appearance of the troops under Hooker was a surprise to the Confederate command. An attack against them was ordered to take place at night. Locally known as the Battle of Wauhatchie, through a general misunderstanding of orders, it assumed the proportions of hardly more than a skirmish. In the confusion of the night attack, a stampede of the mules of the wagon train of Geary's corps did enough damage to the Confederates for a would-be poet of the time to celebrate their feat in parody.

Mules to the right of them  
Mules to the left of them  
And mules behind them  
Pawed neighed and thundered.  
Breaking their own confines,  
Breaking thro' Longstreet's lines  
Into the Georgia troops  
Stormed the 200.



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Wild all their eyes did glare  
Whirled all their tails in air  
Scattering the chivalry there  
    While all the world wondered.  
Not a mule back bestraddled  
Yet how they all skedaddled  
    Fled every Georgian  
Unsabred, unsaddled  
Scattered and sundered.  
How they were routed there  
    By the 200.<sup>13</sup>

The co-ordination of the troops from within and without Chattanooga made possible the third phase of the operation to relieve the besieged town, where "four cakes of hard bread and a quarter pound of pork made a three days' ration." An improvised steamboat, which was built at Bridgeport, was ready for service by the time Lookout Valley was cleared of Confederates. Hardly more than a river flatboat with an engine mounted aboard, the *Chattanooga*, for so it was named, started up river on its maiden voyage on the 29th. The second trip, which was undertaken the next day, was destined for Kelly's Ferry. The two barges which the *Chattanooga* pushed against the current carried 40,000 rations and 39,000 pounds of forage. The stormy day and its unfavorable winds made progress slow; furthermore the crew was not familiar with the waters. The black of night and a driving rain made the last portion of the voyage extremely treacherous. About midnight the boat arrived at its destination, and a courier was sent to report the successful completion of the river journey. . . . "The news went through the camp faster than his horse," General Le Duc, who had both built the steamboat and piloted it on its first major run, reported, "and the soldiers were jubilant and cheering 'The Cracker line open. Full rations, boys! Three cheers for the Cracker line.'" <sup>14</sup>

The supplies could not be brought directly into Chattanooga by steamboat, both because of the rough stretch of water in the mountains and the dominant position of the Confederates on Lookout. At

<sup>13</sup> *Chattanooga Gazette*, April 9, 1864.

<sup>14</sup> Johnson and Buel, eds., *op. cit.*, III, 676-678.

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Kelly's Ferry they were transferred to wagons and hauled along the road on the south bank of the river to Brown's Ferry. After crossing the pontoon bridge there, the wagons proceeded across Moccasin bend to the north bank of the river at Chattanooga where a second pontoon bridge was used to get within the town.

Before long other small steamboats were put in service and the days of the long haul over Walden's Ridge were over. It was estimated that some 10,000 army mules and horses had been lost in the desperate struggle to supply the Federal army. The Cracker line represented victory over starvation, and gave a tremendous lift to the morale of the officers and men.

As the supply line was opened and Federal reinforcements arrived in Chattanooga, Bragg remained inactive. Furthermore he shortly determined upon a separation of his army, and ordered Longstreet with two divisions to move against Burnside at Knoxville. The campaign was a subject of some correspondence between Bragg and Davis, but the latter warned specifically that it would be dangerous to detach Longstreet should a Union threat develop against the Confederate left.<sup>15</sup> The successful clearing of Lookout Valley by Hooker's forces was more than a threat, but Bragg nevertheless proceeded to send Longstreet toward Knoxville as though it were his determination to rid himself of the veteran commander. Longstreet's columns began their march November 5, as the Federal numbers were beginning to equalize the stronger Confederate position on the hills around Chattanooga.

As the high command proceeded with the plans for coming engagements, the ordinary soldiers were involved with daily matters of camp routine. Along the picket lines, they exchanged stories and continued to swap their little treasures. Each kept up with the occurrences in the other army. Grant found this out by an unusual experience on Chattanooga Creek. On riding there one day alone as he was accustomed to doing, he heard the call, "Turn out the guard for the commanding general." As he was not expecting such honor at the moment, he told the guard to pay no attention to him. To his surprise from across the creek he heard a similar command. On look-

<sup>15</sup> O. R., Series 1, LII, part 2, 554.

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ing up he found the Confederates at salute which he amusedly returned.<sup>16</sup>

The movement of Longstreet against Burnside excited Washington. Immediately fears were aroused as to the consequences against the East Tennesseans. Where a few weeks before, Burnside was telegraphed to do something for the troops at Chattanooga, Grant was now asked to do something which might relieve Burnside. Sherman was instructed to hasten his movement to Chattanooga. On November 15, Grant advised Halleck that his preparations and plans were nearly complete. Burnside's relief would be accomplished by driving Bragg's army back into Georgia.

Although the series of engagements which compose the battle of Chattanooga were delayed for a while through the failure of Sherman's troops to arrive on schedule, once the plan was put into execution it proceeded almost without deviation. The first movement was that of Thomas's corps, which opened in the afternoon of the 23rd and drove the Confederates from their position in the middle of the valley back to the line at the foot of Missionary Ridge. This was easily done and the Federal position that night ran north and south from Orchard Knob, approximately a mile east of where it had been. The next in the series of attacks was the responsibility of the force under Hooker. On the morning of November 24, when rain and fog obscured Lookout Mountain from the view of those in the valley, the Federal force crossed Lookout Creek and moved up the west side of the mountain to the foot of the rock escarpment. Forming a line which ran from the precipitous cliffs down the slope, they swept the Confederate pickets from their position and drove them steadily backward to prepared breastworks which ran north and south on the plateau immediately below Point Lookout. The soldiers picked their way among the rocks, fallen trees, and underbrush; "friend and foe were wrapped in a seamless mantle" of fog and cloud. A small Confederate force consisting of approximately 2,000 men guarded the whole of Lookout Mountain. It could not resist the pressure of the more than a corps which the Federals threw against it. By three in the afternoon, the prepared works had fallen and early darkness put an end to the engagement. During the night the Confederates on the

<sup>16</sup> U. S. Grant, *Personal Memoirs*, II, 42.



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top of the mountain as well as those who had been engaged in the fighting retired to join their fellows on Missionary Ridge. In the early hours of dawn on the next day, daring Federal scouts ascended the "chimneys" of the palisades at Point Lookout and found it unoccupied. They ran up the Stars and Stripes as a signal to their comrades in the valley that Lookout Mountain was theirs. Quartermaster General Meigs in his report said: "... Much of Hooker's battle was fought above the clouds. . . ." This descriptive phrase gave name to the engagement and romantically led to the legend of a battle on the mountaintop.<sup>17</sup>

Sherman's troops began to arrive on the morning of November 23 and marched across the pontoon bridge at Brown's Ferry in full sight of the Confederates. They moved behind the hills on the north side of the river as though marching toward Knoxville to the relief of Burnside. In a camping place which was well hidden from observation they stopped, however, to prepare their organization for their part in the coming battle against the main Confederate force. Pontoons had been taken secretly and concealed at the mouth of the North Chickamauga creek to use in ferrying the troops across the Tennessee. About two o'clock on the morning of the 24th, the pontoons were loaded with men and quietly dropped downstream to attack Confederate pickets on the south side of the river near the end of Missionary Ridge. All the rest of the night and morning, the pontoons ferried Sherman's men across the river. A small steamboat was sent from Chattanooga to assist in the crossing, and the pontoons were used for the construction of a bridge. By noon, three divisions with their horses and artillery were on the south bank, and the bridge completed for whatever use might be necessary.

Sherman immediately moved to take the northernmost section of Missionary Ridge, but through a misreading of his maps assaulted instead two detached hills which were unoccupied. However, he was in position for the next day. With Sherman on the left and Thomas in the center, Grant's alignment with the exception of Hooker was complete. On the morning of the 25th, Hooker was to move across the valley from Lookout Mountain to take his place on the right wing near Rossville.

<sup>17</sup> O. R., Series 1, XXXI, part 2, 77-80.



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The Confederates' main position was on the crest of Missionary Ridge from its north end to Rossville Gap. The ridge was some three to four hundred feet above the level of the western valley. The sides were steep and spotted with ravines. Boulders, stumps, and fallen trees, which had been cut to clear a line of fire, lent themselves to its defense. All combined to make it appear a formidable position. However, its extremely narrow crest offered perplexing problems to the army engineers. Rifle pits were constructed at the bottom of the slope, but little effort to prepare a defensive line on the crest was attempted before Thomas's preliminary attack on the 23rd.

The position chosen on the top of the ridge was the actual rather than the military crest. Artillery placed in this position could not be depressed for effective fire against troops attacking up the side. The Confederate line which stretched for some seven miles was very thinly held. It was weakened by the decision to divide the troops, half of whom were sent to the rifle pits at the foot.

Early on the morning of November 25 an almost total eclipse of the moon interested the men of both armies. Day dawned brightly after the fog and rain of the dreary yesterday. The drama in this natural amphitheater was observed by hardened campaigners on both sides, who more than once paid tribute to the scenic canvas on which they moved.<sup>18</sup> Early in the morning, Sherman opened the battle with an attack upon the Confederates above the railroad tunnel through Missionary Ridge. Hooker, who was to hit the other flank, was long delayed in his march from Lookout Mountain, with the result that

<sup>18</sup> In the midst of Sherman's action against the Confederates at the north end of Missionary Ridge, he wrote later that despite the "carnage and noise," he stopped "to look across the vast field of battle to admire its sublimity." W. T. Sherman, *Memoirs*, I, 364. Bragg, whose headquarters were on the top of Missionary Ridge, had a better opportunity to observe the scenery. In a letter to his wife, written the night of November 14, 1863, he said: "Just underneath my headquarters are the lines of the two armies, and beyond their outposts and signal stations are the Lookout, Raccoon and Waldron (sic) mountains. At night all are brilliantly lit up in the most gorgeous manner, by the myriads of campfires.

"No fairy scene in the most splendid theater ever approached it. From my door we can see it for miles on miles, right, left, front and rear. Many persons, and some who have traveled much, say it surpasses any sight they ever witnessed; and that it is worth a trip of a thousand miles to witness it. From Lookout Mountain, too, the sight is magnificent. But enough of grandeur." *Chattanooga Times*, October 25, 1921.

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the attack on that end of the line did not materialize. Although Sherman kept up his assaults against determined opposition, he anxiously awaited news about the co-operating attacks on other parts of the line.

Toward morning's end the Confederates could see activity in the section assigned to Thomas. Colonel E. P. Alexander describes it vividly:

About noon the enemy began to form in masses in front of our centre, about two miles away. About two o'clock these masses deployed and formed two lines of battle, with a front of at least two and a half miles. After completing their arrangements these moved within a mile of our lower works and halted. Behind these two lines a reserve force, apparently equal in number to one of them, was disposed at intervals in close columns of regiments, and followed them some three hundred yards in rear. The whole array was preceded by a powerful line of skirmishers deployed at half distances. One could not but be struck with the order and regularity of the movements and the ease with which the Federals preserved their lines. The sight was a grand and impressive one, the like of which had never been seen before by any one who witnessed it.<sup>19</sup>

This display of power, which could be seen by every Confederate soldier on the front, caused great uneasiness in the ranks. The panic which followed the Federal attack was assigned to this display of overwhelming numbers by some Confederates. One wrote, "Our boys thought the whole world was marching to attack them." As a popular anecdote put it, "one of the Yankee Generals gave the command, 'Attention World! By Nations, right wheel! *By States, Fire!!!!*'"

The Confederates were not the only ones to have a vantage point from which to view the array of Union strength or to be impressed by it. One Union soldier recorded that "as far as I could see, stood two lines of blue coats with beautiful flags waving and bright arms gleaming in the pleasant afternoon sunshine. It was a splendid sight and sent the blood tingling to the fingertips."

The Reverend Mr. McCallie mingled with "a great multitude of spectators standing on the hill . . . at the intersection of East End and McCallie Avenue." Most of them were soldiers on duty in town who

<sup>19</sup> E. P. Alexander, *Military Memoirs of a Confederate*, p. 476. Though Alexander was not present, he constructed his account from those given him.

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watched with critical eyes the progress of the battle. The women still in town viewed as much as they could from upper windows in their houses. But according to one observer, "The current of regular business was not checked; the play of men's little passions was as lively as ever. Jest and laughter eddied around the street corners. . . . But there were signs of heavy weather." These consisted of ammunition wagons and covered ambulances, which, "laboring beneath their freight," made hurried trips between town and field of action.<sup>20</sup>

Grant and his subordinate generals who were on Orchard Knob were less concerned with the appearance of power than with its use. They could no longer wait for Hooker to deliver his blow and the order was consequently passed to Thomas for his men in the center to advance against the rifle pits at the base of the ridge. But the men themselves with more understanding of the immediate circumstances than their commanders did not stop with the completion of their orders. The sweeping charge they made carried them on to the very top of the ridge and the Confederate center was broken.

When Grant saw the start of this charge through his glasses he was surprised and angry. He inquired who had issued such orders and remarked that dire consequences would be the result of such an unauthorized risk. But the successful achievement of the crest swept all recollection of the incident from Grant's mind.<sup>21</sup>

The collapse of the Confederates' center exposed the right and left to flank attack. Although some units continued to fight determinedly during the early evening all Confederate troops abandoned the Missionary Ridge position after nightfall and started a retreat into Georgia. At Ringgold, General Pat Cleburne, one of the ablest of Confederate division commanders, was ordered to block Hooker's pursuit. His rear-guard action was effective long enough for the Confederate trains to make their escape. Between Dalton and Tunnel Hill, the defeated Confederates encamped for the winter months.

The day after the battle was Thursday, Thanksgiving Day. In Chattanooga services were held—"sad, solemn, grand." However,

<sup>20</sup> Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

<sup>21</sup> Versions of this episode appear in numerous accounts, but General Grant does not mention it either in his *Personal Memoirs* or in the description of the battle he wrote for *Battles and Leaders*.



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they were not in the churches, even though the latter "had congregations [but] those who composed them had come silent and suffering and of steady heart on stretchers and in men's arms." The outdoor religious services consisted of gathering the wounded and burying the dead. They were held against the background of the guns of the forts, which fired in celebration of the victory and the day.<sup>22</sup>

The relief of Burnside at Knoxville was strong on Grant's mind. As quickly as possible Sherman was dispatched to his assistance. Longstreet was driven from his lines around Knoxville by the threat of the relief column. By December 7, Federal forces in Chattanooga and Knoxville were free from the threat of Confederate siege.

The success at Chattanooga comprised one of the most complete victories of the war.<sup>23</sup> The natural defense line of the Confederacy, lodged in its mountains, had been broken. The network of railroads to which the little junction town of Chattanooga was the key was now in the secure possession of the Federals. One of the important rail lines from west to east had been lost to the Southern cause, as had the supply areas of Middle and East Tennessee. Although Longstreet continued to hold a small portion of the area for a few months, the liberation of the East Tennesseans, which had rested heavily upon the political leaders in Washington since the beginning of the war, was achieved.

The consequences as far as the commanders of the two armies were concerned reflected the fortunes of the war. Bragg, around whose head disputes had constantly raged, resigned from his command November 25 and was never to hold field command again. Grant, who had grown steadily under actual battle, moved on to assume the command of all the Federal armies in the field.

Those citizens of Chattanooga who had refugeed from town but a few short months before never dreamed as they departed that scenes familiar to them would be caught in such gigantic military operations. Few objects of civic pride remained. What beauty the little town had ever claimed was lost. Business establishments no

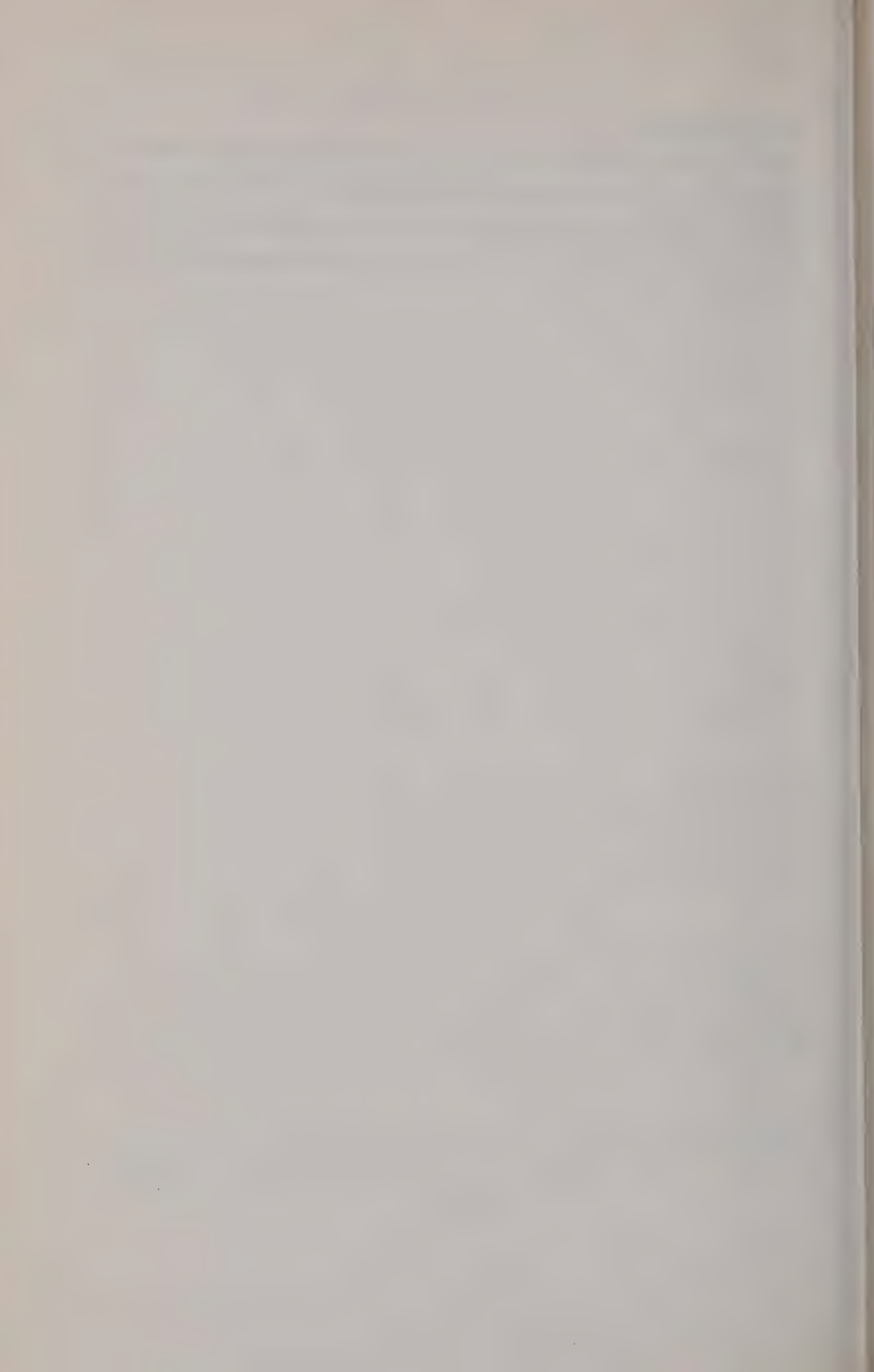
<sup>22</sup> Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-84.

<sup>23</sup> The battles around Chattanooga cost the Union forces 752 killed, 4,013 wounded, and 350 captured or missing. The Confederate losses totaled 361 killed, 2,180 wounded, and 4,146 captured or missing.



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longer operated. Legal and historical records had been burned. The wreckage of war lay strewn about among the hospitals, warehouses, and soldiers' huts. Unknown men had written large pages of history there but the fighting forces soon moved on to different scenes. Chattanooga, from December, 1863, to the end of the conflict, was in the backwash of war.



## CHAPTER XIII

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### *Under Military Occupation*

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Chattanooga, once the fighting in it and its outskirts was over, did not revert, as might be supposed, to anything resembling the bustling little American community, the progress of which had been interrupted by the outbreak of war. Its position on the river and railroads made it too important as a military supply point for that. The impression of the great changes which occurred was indelibly written on the minds of those who experienced them. Years later, the Presbyterian minister, T. H. McCallie, recorded his memories of those trying days:

I shall never forget the Christmas of 1863. Christmas Eve came. All without was winter. It was winter in the city and winter in the State. War had desolated everything. Our church was still used for a hospital and no bell rang out on the air telling us of God, His house, His worship. There was no Sunday school. There was no day school. The churches were all closed, the pastors, except myself, were gone. The old citizens had gone to the South or been sent to the North. Only a few families remained and they very infrequently saw each other. There were no stores open, no markets of any kind, no carriages on the streets, no civil offices, and no taxes or collectors, fortunately. Strangers filled our streets, highways and houses. The rattle of spurs of the officers and the tramp of soldiers fell constantly on our ears. The town was white with tents; tents, tents everywhere, soldiers' tents, sutlers' tents, with precious little in them, tents for

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negroes, or "Freedmen," as they were called. It was winter in the home except for a few precious rays of sunshine. We had no milk, no butter, no cheese, scarcely any fruit; but we had bacon, bread, such as could be made without milk or yeast, a little coffee, some sugar, and a barrel of pickles in brine but no vinegar to put with them. The rays of sunshine were good health, powerful divine protection, keeping us in peace when so many were being sent away from their homes, and a sense of God's forgiveness and watchful care over us.<sup>1</sup>

Few American communities have had a comparable experience. As great Federal armies gathered in Chattanooga's vicinity for further movements into the heart of the Confederacy, the town retained the appearance of an armed camp. Even after the armies moved and some civilian aspects of life were again in evidence, the number of uniforms and the warehouses, crammed with every necessity for armies engaged in active campaigns, displayed the continued dominance of the military. A mob of camp followers and freedmen were naturally drawn to such an army base and complicated the already difficult community life. Nevertheless, the soldiers, who ever dreamed of civilian pleasures, seized every opportunity for recreation, in which they were joined by the remnant of the town's civilian population, and merriment for brief moments took precedence over the grim business of war.

Following the battle of Missionary Ridge, the Federal forces remained in camp in and about Chattanooga for the winter months. From the little village of Ringgold in Georgia to that of Charleston on the Hiwassee in Tennessee, various units were located, with army headquarters in Chattanooga. Here, efficient activity contrasted markedly with the era when the Confederates used the same site as a supply base. Work was organized and moved with a rapidity which reflected the power and resources of the Union. The railroads, under government control, poured food, munitions, and all types of equipment into the warehouses which had been constructed along the streets close to the river. Mounted on their roofs for fire protection were large blue water barrels, with the letters U. S. painted on them,

<sup>1</sup> Armstrong, *op. cit.*, II, 59, quoting the diary of Dr. McCallie.



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which presented "a very neat and attractive yet novel appearance."

The constant danger of fire caused the organization of fire companies. As water was scarce for all purposes, a reservoir was built on the slope of Cameron Hill, and water pumped to it from an engine stationed at the river's edge. Gravity flow was used to get the water to the consumer outlets. Some ingenious engineer devised a scheme to utilize the power developed as the water flowed downhill. A Government gristmill was located along the line of pipe and its stones turned as the water was used in the town.

Near the pumping station was a shipyard. There the hastily built steamboats, which had been used to maintain the Cracker line, were repaired and kept in running order. Later, it was enlarged and other carrying craft and gunboats for patrolling the Tennessee were constructed on its ways.

To facilitate movement to the north side of the river, a military bridge was erected to replace the temporary pontoon bridge which had served an important purpose in the siege. The bridge was located about the foot of Market Street. Stone from the bluff furnace was used to anchor the wooden cribbing of the piers. The whole structure was of wood, and tradition has it that not a nail was used. When it was completed in the fall of 1864, a dance was planned by the men of the post in celebration, but as the bridge soon began to sway with the music, the commandant called off the festivities.

As the war progressed the Federal Army had realized that the railroads were more and more fundamental to modern warfare. The burden of collecting the great quantities of supplies and the maintenance of widely scattered armies dictated the use of this medium of transportation. Furthermore, the strategic location of the roads made them obvious highways for an advance into enemy country. As one Federal remarked to an official of the Western and Atlantic Railroad after the close of the war, "The Union element cannot be too thankful for the fact that your railroad was in existence."<sup>2</sup> But the heavy use of rail equipment and the constant raids on the lines required repairs and replacement of rail. To secure a convenient source of supply of rails, a Government-owned rolling mill and

<sup>2</sup> Johnston, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

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foundry was built at Chattanooga in 1864. A traveler, who visited the community after the war, remarked that among the first things to be seen, as the train came around the foot of Lookout Mountain, was the "lurid glare upon the black waters [of the Tennessee River] of sparks and flame sent out from the chimneys of a rolling mill busy day and night in turning railroad iron to replace the waste of war."<sup>3</sup>

Many of the vacant lots in the scattered little community were taken over by the army and used for wagon and artillery parks, while others were enclosed and used as corrals for hogs, cattle, and army transport animals. Homes and business buildings were converted into offices and barracks for the various departments of the army. Housing, in fact, became most difficult for all. The churches were also turned to military use. The Roman Catholic, the Episcopal and the Cumberland Presbyterian buildings were transformed into ordnance depots, and the Methodist church was used as a prison.

While the able-bodied soldiers carried on the preparations for creating and maintaining a great supply base, an equally important responsibility was necessitated by the care of the sick and wounded. Immediately after the battles around Chattanooga, the churches and hotels supplemented the facilities that the Confederates had erected, but as quickly as possible thereafter, new buildings were provided, and a convalescent camp for officers was constructed on Lookout Mountain. The Presbyterian church was used as a hospital for civilians<sup>4</sup> principally employees of the Government.

The living—infirm and well—were thus provided for, as far, that is, as the place and the circumstances afforded, but no place of burial was available for those from whom the ultimate sacrifice had been demanded by war's insatiable appetite. Scattered over the hills and valleys for miles around Chattanooga, mounds could be seen, where soldiers had performed as well as they could the task of protecting the bodies of their fellows from the ravages of climate and animals. On the battlefields, trenches had been used in which to lay the remains of their onetime defenders or attackers. For many reasons,

<sup>3</sup> Sir John Kennaway, *On Sherman's Track*, p. 91.

<sup>4</sup> *Chattanooga Gazette*, December 11, 1864, gives the information about the use of the churches by the army.



Moccasin Bend of the Tennessee River, New York monument and Park Point in foreground (Chattanooga Convention and Visitors Bureau)









Swing Ferry (William Cullen Bryant, ed., "*Picturesque America*")



Ross's Landing (Bryant, ed., "*Picturesque America*")



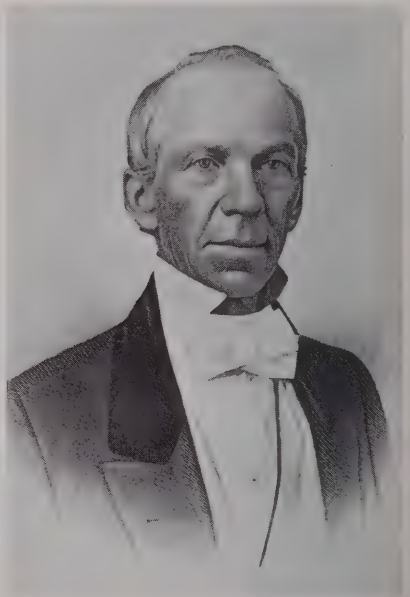
Sequoyah



Chief John Ross



John P. Long



James A. Whiteside





Brainerd Mission



Lookout Mountain Hotel, about 1860



The John Ross House, wartime photo (U. S. War Department)



The Robert Cravens House





"The First Gun at Chickamauga," wartime sketch of action at Reed's Bridge by A. R. Waud (Brown, *The Mountain Campaign in Georgia*)



Longstreet's troops detraining at Catoosa Station, September 18, 1863, wartime sketch by A. R. Waud

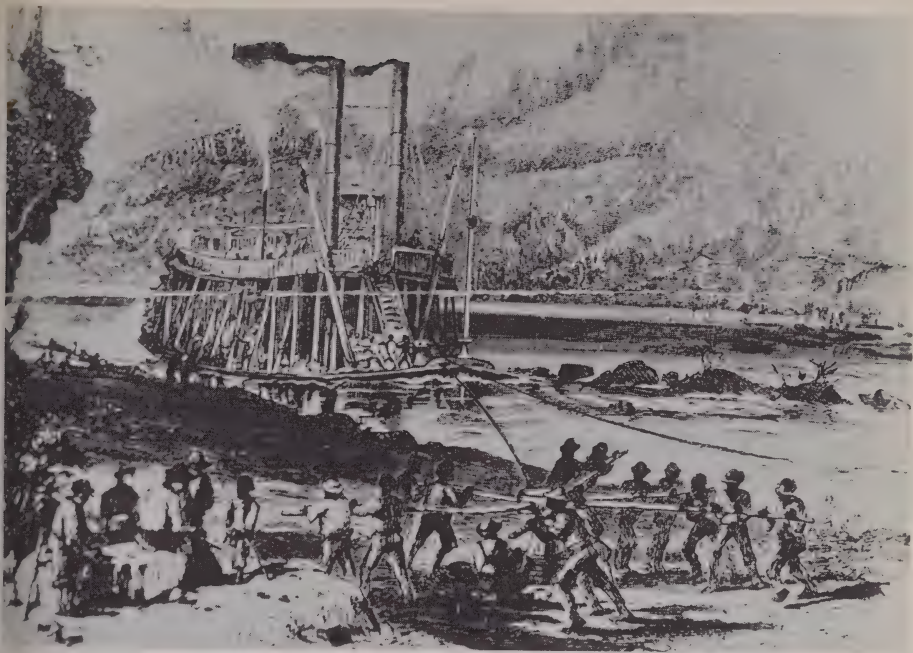


Wheeler's attack on Federal wagon train on Walden's Ridge,  
wartime sketch by Theodore R. Anderson (*Harper's Weekly*)



Military Bridge (U. S. War Department)





Warping steamboat through the Suck



The Crutchfield House



General U. S. Grant and group on Lookout Mountain (U. S. Signal Corps)



View of Chattanooga south from Courthouse Hill (U. S. War Department)

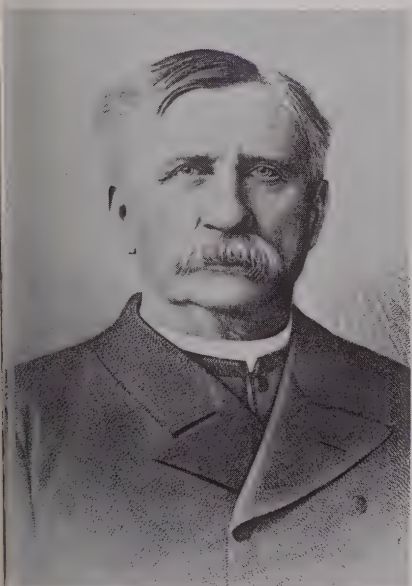




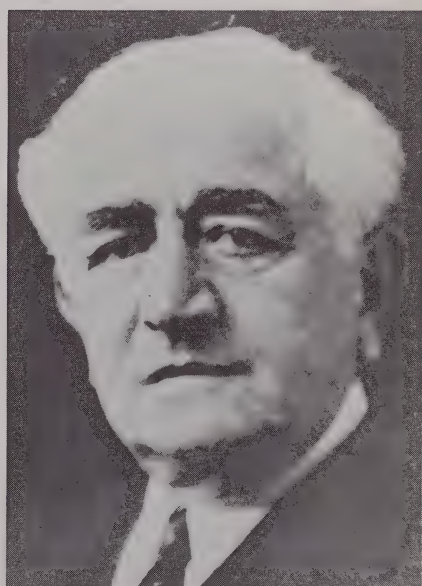
Judge David M. Key



General John T. Wilder



Dr. Jonathan W. Bachman



Adolph S. Ochs



Market Street, 1864 (U. S. Signal Corps, Brady Collection)



W Road, Signal Mountain (R. M. Kell Collection)

The Oldest Firm in Chattanooga.

**PATTEN & PAYNE**

PUBLISHERS,  
 Stationers  
 AND  
 Booksellers,

KEEP A FRESH AND FULL STOCK OF

Miscellaneous Books.	<b>WALL PAPER,</b>	Picture Mouldings.
Blank Books.		School Books.
Stationery.		Picture Frames.

And a Full Line of Stationer's Sundries and Fancy Goods.

Orders from the Country Solicited.

Patten & Payne Advertisement, 1877

726 Market Street.

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DRINK A BOTTLE OF

**Coca-Cola**

5¢ at all stands, grocers and saloons. 5¢

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First ad of Coca-Cola in bottles, 1899





Chattanooga May Festival, 1901



Darrow and Bryan at Scopes' Trial

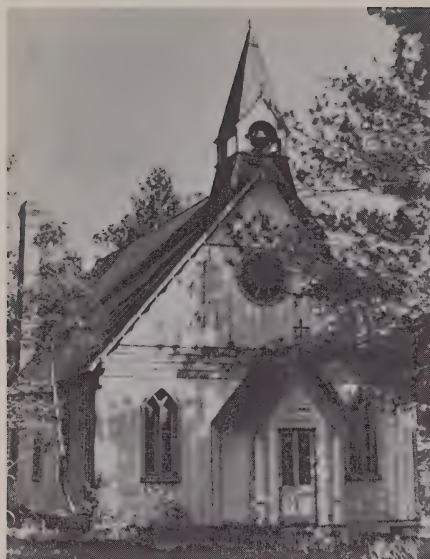




Union Monuments, Viniard Field, Chickamauga Battlefield  
(National Park Service)



Rock City Gardens, Lookout Mountain  
(Chattanooga Convention and Visitors Bureau)



Episcopal Church at Rugby  
(James N. Keen)



Lookout Mountain Incline (Chattanooga Convention and Visitors Bureau)



TVA's Chickamauga Dam (Chattanooga Convention and Visitors Bureau)

## Under Military Occupation

it was apparent that the bodies, whether known or unknown, should be gathered together. So, on Christmas Day, 1863, by order of General Thomas, a National Cemetery was established, "in commemoration of the battles of Chattanooga—and to provide a proper resting place" for the Union dead. The ground chosen was a slight hill near the Western and Atlantic Railroad tracks southeast of town.<sup>5</sup>

As quickly as the cemetery could be prepared, interments were started. Bodies were collected and reinterred as they arrived without regard to units or states. When the traveler, J. T. Trowbridge, was in Chattanooga, he visited the cemetery and was interested by the arrangement employed. He spoke to General Thomas, who had ordered it, and was told, "I am tired of States' Rights, let's have a *national* cemetery."<sup>6</sup>

Through the winter months, the two armies sat in inaction, except for an occasional cavalry raid, while waiting for spring to launch new campaigns. The Confederate Army was encamped in a wide area about Dalton, Georgia. A new commanding general, Joseph E. Johnston, had replaced Bragg. His reputation gave enthusiasm to the troops who had been dispirited by Bragg's unfortunate disposition and his failures in the field. By April the Confederates were a "re-generated army."

The Federal campaign of 1864 was planned as an over-all coordinated effort of the major Union armies. Sherman was placed in command of the forces which confronted Johnston's troops. Late in April, the movement of men and supplies toward Chattanooga, the point at which Sherman's forces organized, began to increase. By the 29th, Sherman reported to Grant, in Virginia, from Chattanooga that all was ready. Five days later the army was put in motion, at the same time that the Battle of the Wilderness began between the forces under Grant and Lee. Southward along the W. & A. to Atlanta, Sherman constantly outmaneuvered Johnston whose force was insufficient to counteract the persistent efforts of the Federals. Atlanta fell on September 2, clearing the way for the famed march to the sea.

The reports of Sherman's advance were read daily by soldiers and

<sup>5</sup> O. R., Series 1, XXXI, part 3, 487.

<sup>6</sup> J. T. Trowbridge, *The South*, pp. 260-262.



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civilians in Chattanooga in the columns of the *Chattanooga Gazette*. James R. Hood, who had been given an enforced vacation from his editorial desk in 1861 by Southern sympathizers because of his Union beliefs, had returned under the protective wing of the Federal Army to re-establish his newspaper. On February 29, 1864, the first issue appeared. It served the Federal Army in the area as had the *Rebel* the Confederate. Army news of every variety was featured, and extreme policies toward Confederate adherents were advocated by Hood as of old.

Once Sherman's force was some distance removed from Chattanooga, fears of marauding guerrillas and Confederate raids were constant. The *Gazette* repeated the warnings of its predecessor, and emphasized that "Madam Rumor" was busy all day long with accounts of raids and fighting in the vicinity of Chattanooga. It was not all rumor, however. Wheeler and Forrest were on the loose in the general area, and none could say where their next foray might hit. The countryside, furthermore, was in constant turmoil. The Union men, feeling that they had the upper hand again, took occasion to strike at neighbors who had terrorized them earlier. The mountains and valleys of the area furnished a hiding place for deserters and other marauders. The result was a general lawlessness, with killings, thefts, and arson frequently reported.<sup>7</sup> Occasional spy scares added to the confusion.

Reports of Confederate activity were often received at post headquarters from the surrounding areas. One such account told of the organization, supposedly, of a company of home guards in neighboring Rhea County. Mounted troops were dispatched to investigate. Upon arrival, the officers were somewhat confused when they discovered that the company was made up of young ladies in uniform. But orders were orders, and the women were placed under arrest and brought to Chattanooga to appear before the post commandant. Some consternation must have been caused when they were marched through the streets to confront General J. B. Steedman. He immediately released them and approved of their organization which was for the relief of Confederate soldiers' families. He ordered the

<sup>7</sup> *Chattanooga Gazette*, December 17, 1864.



## Under Military Occupation

arresting officers to see that they were conveyed safely home. Fear of military prison or exile filled the minds of the young ladies on the riverboat trip to the Federal headquarters. The relief of the general's decision made them forget the duress of the previous hours. Nor was the mission assigned to the Federal officers disagreeable to them. Chivalry took the place of duty, and a supper at the Crutchfield House was quickly arranged. The young ladies were cared for overnight by the wives of Chattanoogaans who were still in town and on the next day they were seen to their homes by their onetime captors.<sup>8</sup>

Not all Confederate sympathizers were so fortunate as this party of girls. By order of Steedman, some of the townspeople were sent to "a cooler latitude," as the editor of the *Gazette* put it. In commenting upon this and similar circumstances, Hood said that it was "a good policy and pre-eminent justice." Only "loyal people" should be allowed to remain in Chattanooga. Apparently, the orders were enforced with varying degrees of severity. The Reverend Mr. McCallie was included in one order for exile, but on reconsideration he was told that retirement to his farm in the country would be sufficient. Even that, according to his testimony, was not required, and he remained to perform his various obligations to the community. His home was used for church services for the Presbyterians as early as February, 1864, and he organized a school the following September, the classes of which met also in his residence.<sup>9</sup>

In the fall of 1864 the threat of large scale military activity again disturbed Chattanoogaans. After the fall of Atlanta, the Confederate Army, then under General John B. Hood, moved back into Tennessee. Although it came no closer to Chattanooga than Lafayette, Georgia, emergency measures were taken. Special notices were posted, stating: "All sutlers, traders and able-bodied men who are doing business in Chattanooga and have the interest of the Government at heart, and are willing to offer their services to the Commander of the Post, in case of emergency will meet at Sharp & Downing's tent on Main

<sup>8</sup> Armstrong, *op. cit.*, II, 54-55.

<sup>9</sup> *Chattanooga Gazette*, July 16, 1864; T. H. McCallie, "Reminiscences" printed in *Chattanooga News*, September 21, 1938.

## The Chattanooga Country

Street . . . for the purpose of organizing a company, so that we may be of some service.”<sup>10</sup> The civilians who were enrolled had specific defense assignments. Although this threat never materialized, cavalry raids on such nearby localities as Trenton, Lafayette, Ringgold, Ooltewah, Tunnel Hill, and McLemore’s Cove were frequently made in the early months of 1865, to the alarm of Chattanooga’s residents.

Despite the repeated reports of troop and guerrilla action, there was “little to relieve the quiet monotony of the Sabbath in Chattanooga.” Such was the observation in mid-July, 1864, of Editor Hood in the columns of the *Gazette*. All activity halted, even to the movement of army wagons; church offered the only contrast. All wore their best clothes and attended services at either the Post Chapel, which was in the Baptist Church, or the McCallie home. In the afternoon, the Negroes held their services in the Post Chapel.<sup>11</sup>

On week days, however, the town concentrated on its primary business of war. The streets were crammed with soldiers on their way to and from the front. Occasionally one of these offered an interesting contrast, as when Dr. Mary E. Walker, famous feminist, who was a surgeon with Sherman’s army and wore a regular man’s uniform, passed through town. Hotels were crowded and restaurants advertised that they were open day and night in order that meals might be snatched by hurried travelers.<sup>12</sup>

The military activity at Chattanooga attracted a heterogeneous following of persons, who made the town their temporary home. “Traders, adventurers, soldiers, poor whites, refugees, and negroes” overwhelmed the small remnant of the old population which was still on hand. Since local business was largely discontinued, sutlers, who established trading facilities for the troops wherever the armies moved, were the source of all types of merchandise and services. They operated under army regulation. Improvised sheds and tents were thrown up on vacant lots, which the army had not pre-empted, while some managed to get the use of permanent structures. Certain

<sup>10</sup> *Chattanooga Gazette*, October 15, 1864.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, July 19, and December 11, 1864.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, April 9, July 10 and 19, 1864.

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of these enterprises, such as Scott, Keen and Company, claimed they would "keep constantly on hand at headquarters of the Armies of the Cumberland and Tennessee" uniforms and all other supplies. Several of the firms operated as chains with numerous branches. In addition to military outfits, clothes for civilians were carried. D. C. Keeler from his "new tent opposite the Crutchfield House" offered cigars, tobacco, cheese, crackers, and stationery for sale. A hair-cutting and dying "salon" occupied another tent. Numerous photographers were on hand to solicit the soldiers' business, and one set up shop on Lookout Mountain at the Point. One canvas structure housed a dentist and his co-worker a physician, a sign of the rudimentary health services then available to soldiers. Several army news depots advertised periodicals and home-town newspapers, and one enterprising sutler offered mules for sale.

An ominous indication of the times was the advertisements of the dealers in coffins and "metallic caskets," who presented themselves, also, as qualified embalmers. One advertised that special attention would be given to sending bodies home "with dispatch and economy." Benjamin Pierce, in addition to his trade in caskets, announced that from his "old stand" on Market Street, customers could secure stonemason's trowels, gate hinges, fire shovels, harness, resin, and wallpaper, while he was prepared to repair and refinish furniture.

The sutlers carried a varied stock, which was not confined to necessities. They found a ready market for fancy goods, notions, and all kinds of souvenirs. At first, there was no effort to regulate the prices on these articles, but by December, 1864, the Post Council of Administration decided that the free market was too readily abused. A schedule of prices covering groceries, fancy goods, clothing, military goods, hats and caps, boots and shoes, tobacco, pipes, and hardware was announced in the newspaper, and all sutlers and traders were ordered to have a "copy of the list conspicuously posted in their place of business." If any had items not listed on the schedule in stock, they were required to report them to headquarters with the bills of purchase for the establishment of prices on them also.

The schedule filled four columns in the newspaper and illustrated the diversity of the merchandise as well as what were considered

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fair prices.<sup>13</sup> Some of the items (with the military goods omitted) ran:

Large cove oysters,	per can	\$ .75
Veal	per can	1.25
Peaches, 1 lb.	per can	.50
Tomatoes	per can	.50
Green corn	per can	.90
Condensed milk	per can	.75
Worcestershire sauce	per bottle	.50
Olive oil, pint	per bottle	1.00
Codfish	per pound	.25
Figs	per pound	.60
Butter	per pound	.70
Black tea	per pound	2.50
Gunpowder tea	per pound	3.50
Cheese	per pound	.45
Lemonis	two for —	.25
Brooms	each	.65
Matches—wooden box	each	.05
Pins	per paper	.10
Flannel shirts, 1st quality	each	4.50
Flannel shirts, 4th quality	each	2.00
Army woolen socks	per dozen	6.20
Fancy neckties, 1st quality	each	.75
Honey soap	per cake	.15
Cosmetic soap	per cake	.60
White ribbed drawers	each	2.75
Silk suspenders	per pair	1.75
Ivory handled shaving brushes, 1st quality	each	.75
Tooth brushes	each	.85
Men's frock coats, 1st quality	each	42.00
Pants	a pair from 9.50 to	20.00
Shoes	a pair from 5.00 to	15.00
Razors	each	1.50
Teaspoons, iron	dozen	1.25
Forks	dozen	1.75
Pocketknives	each 1.00 to	4.00
Camp candlesticks, brass	pair	2.75
Coffee mills	each 1.25 to	2.50
Smoking pipes, briar	each .10 to	1.50
Meerschaum in case, 1st quality		20.75

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, December 13, through 16, 1864. All material about the sutlers has been taken from various issues of the *Gazette*.



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Tobacco, smoking		
Royal	paper	.10
Big Lick	pound	1.25
Turkish	$\frac{1}{4}$ pound	.50
Toodes	paper	.15
Tobacco, chewing, fine cut		
Sunny Side	paper	.15
Sweet Owen	paper	.10
Rose Bud	paper	.10
Just My Choice	paper	.10
Fine Cut	pound	1.00
Tobacco, chewing, plug		
Navy	per pound	1.25
Pocahontas	per pound	2.25
Cigars		
General Grant	each	.05
General Scott	each	.10
Henry Clay	three for	.25

Although the sutlers complained that the prices were placed so low they could not do business profitably, there is no evidence that the order was rescinded or changed. Other regulations were already in effect when these price lists were published. "The sale of distilled intoxicating Liquors and Ale to enlisted men at this Post is forbidden," General Order No. 5 read. "Any violation of this order will subject the offender to severe punishment,"<sup>14</sup> Beer was allowed, but at least one dispenser advertised, "I will sell no private soldier more than two glasses of beer on the same day."

In spite of the effort to enforce rigidly the regulations, black-market trading was occasionally attempted. One of the large companies was closed temporarily as a punishment for trading in "illicit calico." And an individual who forgot the "little formality" of obtaining a trading permit had a "trunkful of feminine gear" confiscated.<sup>15</sup>

Some of the advertisements in the columns of the local newspaper were for a very different purpose. A staff officer, who had set himself up in one of the houses in the city, sought a housekeeper. His advertisement was worded so as to limit the number of applicants. It read: "A young lady of personal attraction and sociability, and not over

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, June 18, 1864.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, March 16, 1864.

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thirty years preferred. No objections to a widow." Another, "A gentleman of good business and plenty of means," wished "to correspond with a Union lady, who is willing to become a helpmate instead of a 'help eat.'"

As soon as the situation became definite enough, the permanent detachment on duty in Chattanooga sought diversion from routine. Some of them brought their wives and set up housekeeping. They were joined in social activities by the civilians who held positions with the army or its associated enterprises and by some of the townspeople. Lookout Mountain attracted many hikers and picnickers. Lula Falls, Rock City, and Point Lookout were favorite spots. The photographer who set up at the Point was kept busy, and many a home in faraway states received photographs of loved ones against the panoramic view from the mountaintop. Caves were found and explored; laurel root was dug to be fashioned into pipe bowls and other souvenirs by whittlers. One group of curious investigators discovered that one of the battery emplacements was located on an old Indian mound, and amateur archeologists undertook excavations to find artifacts and other remains.<sup>16</sup>

The correspondents who composed the Bohemian Club moved from their location in town to an attractive spot on Lookout Mountain below the Point and set up Camp Harper's Weekly, where they wrote and sketched. The reason for the move was primarily an escape from the "forced captivity," in which they were caught during the siege, but their new found liberty was not altogether pleasant. Heavy winds upset their tents occasionally and flooding rains made life at times "rough, laborious, fatiguing—everything in fact but uninteresting and slow." In part the latter comment may have been due to the social aspects, for the area was a popular one "where the army chivalry and beauty . . . were to be seen reveling . . . or dancing."

A number of formal dances were given with the largest one a "grand military ball," held in one of the new commissary buildings on Market Street. "Elaborate decorations" were used to conceal the ordinary purpose of the dance hall, and the merriment continued

<sup>16</sup> M. C. Read, "Ancient Mound Near Chattanooga, Tennessee," *Annual Report . . . of the Smithsonian Institution*, 1867, pp. 401-402.

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until daylight after a midnight repast was enjoyed by all participants. In such gatherings, the "handsomest and most accomplished daughters of the South with a fair sprinkling of as lovely representatives, of the North" offered feminine companionship in the generally masculine population. Men could find recreation in such activities as the meetings of the Pioneer Military Lodge of the Masonic order. Billiard matches and horse races appealed to the more sporting element. Theatrical companies visited the community and gave a variety of performances. At one, "Miss Lizzie Walker sang 'Just Before the Battle' with touching effect and La Belle Louise was unusually successful with 'The Flag of the Free.'" Bishop's Varieties and Cumberland Minstrels set up for a long stay with a change of program every two nights, "given by fourteen of the Best Artists." The tent, according to accounts, was crowded nightly and some, at least, must have been inspired to attempt their own rendition of the acts. One advertiser stated that he was ready to train any prospective student of the banjo "in ten lessons."

Naturally at such a time and with such a group Independence Day was the opportunity for a great demonstration of patriotic enthusiasm. Soldiers and civilians joined to make the day memorable. In the early morning cannons were fired and drums and rifles combined to salute the nation's birthday. Addresses were followed by a picnic supper on Lookout Mountain. Fireworks lit up the night sky, as the army on holiday closed an eventful Fourth.<sup>17</sup>

In an area where so much fighting had gone on and where the chaos of guerrilla activity had added to the destruction and confusion, there naturally was much deprivation and suffering to contrast with the fortunate group who indulged in the social entertainments of the post at Chattanooga. The armies had stripped the countryside. Food for animals and human beings was scarce at best, but the winter of 1863-64, after Chattanooga and Knoxville had undergone military siege, was most difficult, particularly in upper East Tennessee. At Knoxville, the East Tennessee Relief Association was organ-

<sup>17</sup> W. F. Shanks, "Lookout Mountain, and How We Won It," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, XXXVII, (June, 1868), 1-15; *Chattanooga Gazette*, March 5, June 10, July 5, 6, 22, August 16, September 10, 28, 29, October 5, 8, 12, 20, 22, November 2, 1864, January 14, 1865.

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ized and representatives sent to Northern cities in an effort to secure help. They found a ready response and received donations of funds from people eager to assist the East Tennesseans whose loyalty had brought them such distress. Societies were formed, among them the Pennsylvania Relief Association for East Tennessee, which sent two commissioners South with food and clothing and instructions to give "no part of this bounty" to Confederate sympathizers of military age.

Not all of this was planned as mere charity, for garden seeds were included to inspire the people to make an effort to help themselves. Furthermore, a representative of the Western Sanitary Commission, a forerunner of the modern Red Cross, planted one hundred acres in vegetables near Chattanooga for distribution as soon as the crops matured.<sup>18</sup> Milk was also very scarce in Chattanooga, although some residents had been able to keep a cow alive during the difficult time of the siege. "During the worst period," the editor of the *Gazette* noted, "the cows were reduced to eating 'hard tack' being obtained by the owners in exchange for milk. . . . This was about the time that mules were living on wagon tongues and fence rails."<sup>19</sup>

In the summer of 1864, refugees began to appear in Chattanooga in ever-increasing numbers. As the armies moved deeper into Georgia, white and black wanderers in a destitute condition came into the community in search of food and safety. By November 3,893 were reported at Chattanooga although officials were sending them out of town as rapidly as possible. Vast numbers of Negro refugees, estimated to be the equal of those enrolled, were to be found scattered all over town, although the majority of them concentrated along the river. Some secured tents while others constructed huts for shelter. A week after the rough census was taken, 4,000 rations were being issued daily by the post commissary to the destitute in the surrounding territory.<sup>20</sup>

The army controlled the city government after the day in Septem-

<sup>18</sup> James B. Campbell, "East Tennessee During the Federal Occupation, 1863-1865." *E. T. H. S. Publications*, No. 19 (1947), pp. 70-75; *Chattanooga Gazette*, March 24, April 9, 1864; *Report to the Contributors to the Pennsylvania Relief Association for East Tennessee*, pp. 11. 26.

<sup>19</sup> *Chattanooga Gazette*, June 9, 1864.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, August 16, November 26, December 2, 1864.



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ber, 1863, when Federal troops entered the city. After the Confederate armies were defeated and driven from Chattanooga's doorstep, the civilians still in town began to work toward the re-establishment of civil administration. Andrew Johnson, who had been appointed military governor of Tennessee, March 3, 1862, frequently contended with the military authorities for a return to civil control where it was possible, but without success. President Lincoln in December, 1863, issued a proclamation of amnesty and reconstruction in which a very moderate plan was outlined for the re-establishment of the state governments, as quickly as possible, and their return to their place in the Union. With this backing Johnson ordered that elections for county officials should be held throughout the state on the first Saturday in March, 1864. But the oath and other tests prescribed by the military governor as qualifications for the franchise were not in keeping with the spirit of Lincoln's ameliorating intentions, which reflected the desire of the Great Emancipator to kill the idea of disunion while aiding, if possible, the man who held it.

Chattanoogans were urged by the editor of the *Gazette* to take part in the March elections. It was the first time in twenty years, the stanch journalist stated, that loyal, patriotic citizens could capture control of the state. Despite these importunings, the elections were "a serious farce" in Hamilton County and over the state. The restrictions placed on voting by Johnson were resented by many Unionists, who abstained from the polls, and Confederate sympathizers were naturally excluded from the ballot lists. Although twenty-one men received votes for eight offices in Hamilton County, the total number who went to the polls was only seventy-five. In spite of the inference which might be drawn from these totals, civil authority, as a result, was again displayed in the persons of a duly elected sheriff, clerk of the circuit court, county court clerk, county trustee, county register, tax collector, constables, and justices of the peace.<sup>21</sup>

In his editorial comment on the election the editor of the *Gazette* said, "The day passed off in an orderly and quiet manner, and al-

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, March 6, 1864. George W. Rider was chosen sheriff, although he received but 29 votes. Two candidates, unopposed in their elections, had only 67 ballots cast for them.

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though the number of votes was not large, it was the resumption of civil rights long dormant with us." As a further step toward the full re-establishment of civil authority in Hamilton County, the *Gazette*, on June 18, 1864, advertised a mass meeting of citizens to decide "whether a Judge and Chancellor shall be appointed or not." The headline was, "Do the people desire the restoration of civil law?" As though in answer, on June 24, Governor Johnson appointed Daniel C. Trewhitt, tried and true Unionist and veteran of the Greeneville convention in 1861, to the position of chancellor.<sup>22</sup>

As time grew close for the Presidential election of 1864, Tennesseans were disturbed by their position. They did not understand whether they were in the Union or not, even though virtually the entire state had been cleared of the Confederate armies. Despite this, the residents of Chattanooga were called to convene in June, 1864, for important political business. They were to choose delegates for the National Union convention which was to meet in Baltimore.

At the convention in the Maryland city, there was some question about the seating of the Tennessee delegates but the appearance of William G. Brownlow on the platform was sufficient to overcome doubts. Andrew Johnson's name was proposed and accepted for the vice-presidential nomination. As the vice-president must be a resident of the United States, the inference was that the convention considered Tennessee to be still in the Union.

The Unionists in Chattanooga and Hamilton County were pleased by the nomination of Lincoln and Johnson, and called a mass meeting for July 4 at Sale Creek "to ratify" it. East Tennesseans supported the National Union ticket with enthusiasm. The presence of Johnson as Lincoln's running mate assured them, they thought, of a position of advantage in the coming difficult days of transition from war to peace. A division had already begun to develop between the East Tennessee Unionists and the men from the other sections of the state. The *Gazette* followed affairs closely and political news was for the time more prominent than that of the army movements. On November 9, it reported that Lincoln and Johnson had carried Chattanooga. Two days later, it proclaimed the news that Lincoln had swept every

<sup>22</sup> Hamilton County, *Chancery Court Records*, vol. 1, 1864-

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state in the Union. When the electoral votes were counted, however, those of Tennessee were thrown out by Congress. Andrew Johnson was sworn in as vice-president, but apparently Tennessee was not considered a state despite the Constitution.

Upon the election of Lincoln and Johnson, the necessity to choose a new governor for Tennessee was realized. A convention was called to meet in Nashville early in December, but because of the invasion of the state by the Confederates under Hood, it was delayed for a month. This convention was dominated by the East Tennesseans who at last saw the power of the state falling into their hands. Neither carpetbaggers nor scalawags, they cleverly maneuvered so that the convention, for which there was no delegated authority, as the members went largely of their own volition, carried out their wishes and placed power in their hands. Some of the conservatives, who were outnumbered, gave up the fight and left for home, but others remained to attempt to restrain the radicals. The convention nominated Parson Brownlow for governor and selected a legislative ticket. Then it turned itself into a Constitutional convention and also assumed the prerogatives of the legislature. The Ordinance of Secession was repealed, and all acts of the legislature under the Confederacy were nullified. Slavery was outlawed in the state in a Constitutional amendment, which was to be ratified by the voters. Dates were set for an election for this purpose, and another to choose state officials. The qualifications for voters were prescribed: they were not only to be known to the judges as indisputably loyal Unionists, but each had to write his name on the back of his ballot, which was preserved for possible future use. This remarkable assumption of power by the convention was put in effect by the proclamation of Governor Johnson.<sup>23</sup> Although the vote was light, Brownlow won the gubernatorial contest and the amendment was accepted.

<sup>23</sup> T. B. Alexander, *Political Reconstruction in Tennessee*, pp. 18-32; Hamer, *op. cit.*, II, 581-598. Hamer gives the following results in the elections: Brownlow was elected by a vote of 23,222 to 35. The amendment carried 26,865 to 67. In Hamilton County, the amazing Parson received 705 votes without a ballot being cast against him.

In the election for members of the Legislature, two Chattanoogaans were chosen from its district. James R. Hood, editor of the *Gazette*, was elected to the House, and A. M. Cate, another radical leader, to the Senate.



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These elections mark the transition in Tennessee from the military era to that of reconstruction politics. In the same period the *Gazette* began to reflect economic change in Chattanooga. "Our businessmen are seeing plainly the beginning of the end of this great national struggle," Editor Hood wrote in February, "and they are preparing for the change whatever it may be." This observation was the result of the opening of several new enterprises, including a dry goods store, a drug store, and a millinery and dressmaking establishment. The whole tone of the paper's advertisements began to change with accent being placed upon civilian items.

This forecast was shortly confirmed as the Confederate forces surrendered and brought an end to the conflict. Greatest excitement for the soldiers stationed in Chattanooga followed the news of the fall of Richmond. Jenkin Lloyd Jones, a careful observer and a faithful Federal soldier, recorded the events in his diary. "Its effect on the camp was curious, each one moving briskly aglow with animation. Organized cheers is [sic] played out amongst old soldiers, but the broken, wild Indian-like whoops that pierced the air nearly all the afternoon would almost be considered terrific by 'tame people.' At 6 P.M. one hundred guns were fired from the surrounding hills. Each boom called for a hearty response from the many tented hills and hollows of Chattanooga, and seemed to crush the last lingering doubt in every bosom."

One week later the cannon spoke again in "thunder tones" for the surrender at Appomattox. "Two hundred guns fired in rapid succession, around us on all sides, which mingled with the huzzahs of troops," Artilleryman Jones again noted. There was, however, one casualty; that was the Indian mound, which some of the soldiers had excavated. In the shaft, which had been dug, vegetables and other supplies had been stored by the Sanitary Commissioner. The firing "produced such a shock that the mound 'caved in,' burying tools, vegetables, etc, to be found, perhaps by some future explorer, as proof of the intelligence of the race of the mound builders."<sup>24</sup>

This enthusiastic response to the victory was, however, shortly

<sup>24</sup> J. L. Jones: *An Artilleryman's Diary*, pp. 318, 319, 321. Read: *op. cit.*, p. 402.

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submerged in sorrow at the news of President Lincoln's assassination. On Saturday evening, April 15, Jones wrote in his diary: "'Tis night, a beautiful day has just closed. But alas! a dark pall hangs over our camp. The soldier mourns the loss of the noblest American of the day. President Abraham Lincoln has fallen by the hands of a traitorous assassin. 2 P.M. we started out to graze, each and all lighthearted and merry. But lo! while out near the foot of Mission Ridge, the stars and stripes over Fort Creighton were seen to descend to half-mast, and the news reached us as if by magic of the fall of our noble president. A gloom was cast upon every one, and silently we returned to camp, still hoping for a contradiction. But it was too true. The scene that followed was one very seldom seen in the tented field. But a soldier is not, as many think, wholly void of feeling. All regarded the loss of him as of a near and dear relative. Terrible were the oaths and imprecations uttered through clenched teeth against the vile perpetrators."

The next day, he noted, "The whole town was draped in mourning, flags tied with black, and white crepe exhibited in all parts of the town, while the 100-pounder Parrotts high up on Cameron Hill fired half-hour guns from 5 A.M. till 6 P.M. The gloom of yesterday still hangs over the camp."<sup>25</sup>

Demobilization became immediately of primary interest to the soldiers, who dreaded the monotony of garrison life. However, the regular details went on. Jones complained when placed on one, "On guard once more, and eight hours more of the rebellion to be trod out by night." With his fellows, he drew a gleam of hope from every circumstance he could. On May 5th, he wrote in his diary, "Ration day. Drew two days' rations of bread and three of hard-tack, no more soft bread to be issued. They want us to eat the surplus hard-tack. This is considered significant."

Some excitement was created as returning Confederate veterans passed through town. "Many of them were quite splendidly dressed," Jones noted, "having the finest uniforms I have ever seen with them. I talked with many of them in a friendly strain, astonished to find them so ignorant of the last year. But most of them are heartily tired

<sup>25</sup> Jones: *op. cit.* p. 323.

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of war, and say they are willing to bide the will of the United States, but fear Andy Johnson's severity. One poor fellow in a sad strain said he 'was going to the place where his home once was, but God knows where it is now, I have not heard from any of them for ten months.' They were commanded by one of the most desperate, wild-looking colonels I have ever seen. . . . He wore a large, warm, home-made cloak, plaited around the waist like an old fashioned wammus, hanging clear to his heels, and a coarse white hat with a brim a foot wide, and greasy hair below his shoulders."<sup>26</sup>

At first, a period of typical chaotic change from war to peace distracted soldiers and civilians, but as time went by, matters settled down. Demobilization, of course, became a primary interest. In Chattanooga, one phase of this activity was the sale of the great stores of supplies with which the warehouses were crammed. "Every conceivable article that could be used by an army" was sold at public auction. Wherever one went, the song of the auctioneer could be heard, as buildings, steamboats, harness and nose bags, cut stone, and other items passed under the hammer to be purchased by the highest bidder.

The waterworks was sold to private owners, while the military bridge was given to the municipality. The railroads were turned back to their owners, although they were in bad order, and a considerable length of time was required to get them back into good running condition. The local churches were repaired by the quartermaster and were soon fulfilling their proper function for their congregations. Their number was increased in 1866, when the Jewish citizens organized the Hebrew Benevolent Association.<sup>27</sup>

Already a number of Union troops had been mustered out of the

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 322, 333, 336, 337.

<sup>27</sup> *Chattanooga Gazette*, February 1, 3, 4, 8, March 28, September 2, 23, October 6, 25, 26, 27, November 5, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24, 25, 1865; Xenophon Wheeler, Manuscript of Speech given January 5, 1906, now in Chattanooga Public Library; C. R. Fish, *Restoration of the Southern Railroads*, 10.

The Hebrew Benevolent Association later became the Mizpah (which means Lookout) Congregation. When Adolph Ochs brought his father and mother to town in 1880, Julius Ochs became "the first real lay-Rabbi in Chattanooga." Letter to the authors from Lester D. Cohn, July 5, 1940.



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army and had decided to make their home in Chattanooga. Residents of earlier days began to return. Some of the latter, like David M. Key, who had been a prominent lawyer before the war and had served as an officer in the Confederacy, were naturally uncertain as to their status. Before returning, Key had his brother inquire of the Union sympathizer and his former Chattanooga friend, William Crutchfield, if it would be advisable for him to bring his family back to town. Late in August, 1865, Crutchfield replied:

Maj. Key's deportment was such as far as I have been informed to treat all men kindly, courteously & gentlemanly regardless of their political opinions—any man in the Rebel Army deporting himself thus—has nothing to fear from an honorable high minded intelligent community. As an officer in the Army I presume he is aware of the various proclamations and the many difficulties on the path of a prominent Rebel.

In this section, I can assure you, Maj. Key would be kindly treated and such help as can be rendered by me and mine and all his old friends shall be freely, frankly, & cheerfully given.<sup>28</sup>

This indication of tolerance in what was considered a "Yankee center" was made real as soon as the Key family returned in November, 1865. A friend gave them a house, rent free. "My health," Key wrote years later, "was wretched. Our Confederate money was worthless, and we had none other. The people of the neighborhood were wonderfully kind to us. One furnished us his best milch cow. Another who owned a mill, sent us breadstuffs and all were generous. I cultivated a good garden, about six acres in corn and a half acre in potatoes. . . . The Negroes who had been in the Federal lines began to return to their former homes, bringing with them some greenbacks, and were anxious to purchase some finery for their families. My wife disposed of a great deal of her wardrobe to them for whatever she could get, and some money was raised in this way. One fellow took quite a fancy to my uniform and my wife sold it to him at quite a low figure. . . ." <sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup> W. Crutchfield to S. A. Key, August 28, 1865, in Key Collection.

<sup>29</sup> Key scrapbooks. Key was granted a full pardon for his participation in "the rebellion" by President Johnson.

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Key, like all Confederate soldiers and sympathizers, was confronted by a puzzling legal dilemma. Historical precedent gave them no comfort, as rebellions—and the South was considered by contemporaries to have been in rebellion—had usually brought extreme penalties upon those who participated in them. This Southern effort had ended in unconditional surrender, the terms of which were indefinable. Ex-Confederates did not know whether person or property was secure, nor were they helped by the decisions of the courts. In Hamilton County, the Chancery Court held in January, 1865, that debts which had been paid with Confederate money were still collectible, even though payment had been made and accepted when the Confederacy was in power in the area. In another case, it was held that Confederate soldiers, even when acting under orders, could be held responsible for what they had done.<sup>30</sup>

The transition from war to peace called for the reestablishment of civil government in Chattanooga. As local post commanders were authorized to restore civilian authority whenever it was deemed advisable, an order was issued for an election of mayor and aldermen on October 7, 1865. There is no record of who voted or how many ballots were cast in this election, but when the tallies were completed, Richard Henderson had been chosen mayor. These officials served only until the first Monday in January, 1866, but their task was an onerous one, as it included a complete reorganization of the local government.<sup>31</sup>

One by one, the newly constituted board and mayor established the acts by which the city government could operate. Rates were set for business licenses to raise the revenues which were so desperately needed. A general business license cost \$10 a year; a liquor license, \$25; the operation of ten-pin alleys, billiard and Jenny Lind tables, \$10 each a year. First class taverns paid \$50 annually while those rated second-class paid only \$10. Theater performances cost \$10

<sup>30</sup> *Chattanooga Gazette*, January 25, 26; November 15, 1865.

<sup>31</sup> O. R., Series 3, III, 148-164; General order No. 100, April 24, 1863, Adjutant-General's Office, Washington, sets up rules for military procedures and occupation; City of Chattanooga, *Mayor and Aldermen, Minutes*, 1865, October 7; 1868, Dec. 26.

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per night while circuses and menageries were taxed \$30 a day. Other activities were licensed at somewhat the same rates.

The number of wooden buildings which had been erected for army purposes in close conjunction to each other had created a fire hazard, which the new city fathers moved to control. A fire department was created and the equipment which had been used by the military was given to the municipality. A "chief engineer" and his assistants were chosen to direct the fire-fighting efforts, and to be sure that their authority would be recognized at any conflagration, it was ordered that the "Chief Engineer . . . wear in case of fire a white leather hat with initials C.E.C.F.D. and his assistants, 1st and 2nd, initials A.E.C.F.D., these hats and initials to be furnished or paid for by the city."

The greatest immediate problem to confront the authorities was the alarming amount of smallpox in the community. To prevent its further spread, the assembly of people in groups was forbidden. Owners of property were warned that their premises should be kept clean or the authorities would attend to it at the expense of the owners. All loiterers were to be arrested and if without local residence were to be "conveyed beyond the limits of the city."

Realizing the complexity of their task and the limited resources with which they had to work, the mayor and his associates stated one of their problems vividly to the military for assistance. In a formal petition, they pointed out that the war had caused the loss of city property and revenue. It had brought a "large concourse" of poverty-stricken people to town, among whom smallpox had broken out. During the military occupation the army had collected "a considerable amount of money from the citizens of this place for privileges, fines, etc. . . ." This had been accumulated as a post fund. "Be it therefore resolved," the petition stated, "that Major General George H. Thomas, be and he is here-by most respectfully yet earnestly requested to set apart or cause to be set apart so much of the Post-fund aforesaid as may be deemed sufficient to relieve such of our poor as are already afflicted with the small-pox, and to institute such measures as may be proper to prevent the spread of the disease,



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and that the same when so set apart be placed at the disposal of the City authorities.”

Alderman William Crutchfield was appointed to convey the resolution to the military authorities and to treat with them in an effort to secure the use of a sawmill building near the mouth of Citico Creek to use as a pest house. Unfortunately, the request was refused and the city government was forced to continue to attempt to cope with the circumstances with its improvised resources.

Another source of constant difficulty was the “large number of vicious, outbreaking persons, and thefts. . . .” The city officials, disturbed that even visitors to the community were subject to violence, set up a volunteer police force composed of the citizens of the town.<sup>32</sup> Law and order in chaotic times created an extreme problem. The presence of refugees, white and black, returning Confederates who had been mustered out or released from war prisons, Federal troops impatient for demobilization, marauding gangs who roamed the countryside, and a number of aimless camp followers seeking any opportunity, were active ingredients for almost any troublemaking. A Union man who had set up in business followed a shoplifter to find him attempting to repeat his crime, whereupon the shopkeeper shot and killed the thief. He was immediately jailed but bribed the jail-keeper and escaped, accompanied by six Confederates who were lodged in the same calaboose. A second case of robbery involved the office of the assistant quartermaster from which \$22,500 was taken. The money was recovered a week later, but the robber or robbers were not apprehended.

In another instance, two veterans of the Confederate Army were assigned a guard of Federal soldiers to protect them from possible molestation by marauders. The two men took a contract to furnish cordwood to the post at Chattanooga. The work required that they range over the countryside seeking adequate stands of timber. In some areas no one was positively safe, whether of Confederate or Union background, so the post commander provided a guard of

<sup>32</sup> *ibid.*

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armed soldiers for the two ex-Confederates, who were thus enabled to perform their contract in safety.<sup>33</sup>

The Negro refugees, however, presented the chief problem. The principal area where they congregated was on the north side of the river. Here "a village of huts" known as Contraband sprang up. In December, 1865, J. T. Trowbridge visited the settlement. He was very sympathetic to the freedmen, and his description of one of the temporary hovels vividly pictures existing conditions.

"... I found a middle-aged woman patching clothes for her little boy, who was at play before the open door. Although it was a summer-like December day, there was a good fire in the fireplace. The hut was built of rails and mud; the chimney of sticks and sun-dried bricks, surmounted by a barrel. The roof was of split slabs. There was a slab mantel-piece, crowded with bottles and cans; a shelf in one corner loaded with buckets and pans; and another in the opposite corner devoted to plates, cups and mugs. I noticed also in the room a table, a bed, a bunk, a cupboard, a broom without a handle, two stools, and a number of pegs on which clothing was hung. All this within a space not much more than a dozen feet square.

The family kept no chickens, for as the woman explained her neighbors were too fond of poultry: "They just pick 'em up and steal 'em in a minute!" She also gave a report on employment by saying that "A heap is workin', and a heap is lazin' around."<sup>34</sup> To aid the refugees, an office of the Freedmen's Bureau was established in Chattanooga to help keep down lawlessness, to act as an employment agency, and to carry on other services. As there were more than 6,000 Negroes in and around Chattanooga, the agents of the Bureau had a task on their hands. Employment had been secured for approximately 3,000 others, most of whom went to plantations in the possession of Northern men in the Mississippi Valley, according to Trowbridge.<sup>35</sup>

The Western Freedmen's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal

<sup>33</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, May 31, 1914. Interview with Marcus B. Long.

<sup>34</sup> Trowbridge, *op. cit.*, pp. 252-253.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 251; *The Chattanooga Gazette*, October 27, November 7, 1865.

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Church also was represented in Chattanooga by an agency. A major part of its activity was to furnish teachers for the schools which were attended by the freedmen. At the time of Trowbridge's visit, these schools were closed because of the smallpox epidemic which was then raging, but he reported that the average attendance at them was 600 and that each scholar paid one dollar a month for instruction. The post school, he said, was somewhat different from the usual, in that its pupils were from the white refugees. Though the post garrison was composed of Negro troops, their children attended the freedmen's schools. The white pupils at the post school were of all ages. They numbered about 150, all "woefully ignorant," according to the visiting writer. There was a very small charge for attendance, as the money for the school's operation was secured principally from the post fund.<sup>36</sup>

A census of the local population was reported in the *Gazette* for November 7, 1865. There were 1,578 white males, 744 white females, and 797 white children, a total white population of 3,119. The colored people in the town's limits were: 900 males, 930 females, 827 children, totaling 2,657. The total number of people in Chattanooga proper were 5,776. Across the river, it was estimated there were 3,500 Negroes. In addition, 3,000 soldiers were still stationed in the town. From the report of those who paid privilege taxes to the city, it is possible to secure some idea of the amount of economic activity. From October 14 to December 20, 1865, \$2,985 were paid into the city treasurer by 73 merchants, 3 auctioneers, 7 confectioners, 38 liquor dealers, 3 butchers, 2 billiard salons, 3 livery stables, 2 restaurants, 2 first-class taverns, 5 boardinghouses, 10 peddlers, 36 two-horse drays, 10 one-horse drays, 9 exhibitions, and 2 circus companies.<sup>37</sup>

One of the two circus companies was that of Thayer and Noyes, which was in town for performances on November 1. Although the city fathers had forbade the gathering of assemblies, apparently circuses were exempt. Those who attended the evening show got

<sup>36</sup> Trowbridge, *op. cit.*, p. 251.

<sup>37</sup> City of Chattanooga, *Mayor and Aldermen, Minutes*, 1865, Oct. 7,—1868, December 26, pp. 65, 201. An official city census in April 11, 1867, gives the Chattanooga population as 5,779.



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more thrills than they anticipated. A sudden storm brought squally winds which blew the tent down upon the audience. "For a few minutes great excitement prevailed, men were shouting for their friends, women were calling for help, and the children were screaming." Fortunately, no one was hurt, although all were drenched and splattered with mud. This good fortune caused everyone to go home thankful and still appreciative of the ability of the performers.

Some of the men found relaxation in baseball, a game which had been brought to Chattanooga by the army. Two clubs were organized in the early fall of 1865 and played each other a series of contests. The teams were given the names of their pitchers and a typical score was Siegfried's 36, Ramage's 23.<sup>38</sup>

The work of dismantling the forts which ringed the horizon at Chattanooga was completed during the winter of 1865-66. Altogether 2,000 pieces of artillery and several hundred tons of ammunition were hauled to the depot and shipped to arsenals in the North. Demobilization of the military force took place at the same time. Men were mustered out as rapidly as possible and by April, 1866, Chattanooga's streets, which for so long had been the background for men in uniform, were practically bare of troops.<sup>39</sup>

The people, however, found the transition from war to peace much more real and difficult than the change from peace to war in 1861. At the dawn of war the realities of carnage could not be understood or anticipated. Few stopped to figure costs or human suffering. The feeling between neighbors and the division in families which grew under war's emotions were blind and bitter. The fury of Mars left its great toll of casualties which could not be demobilized or dismantled and shipped away. The ghosts of the past remained to hamper the effort of building anew. Yet men were undismayed and could still dream of the future.

<sup>38</sup> *Chattanooga Gazette*, Oct. 29, 31, Nov. 1, 2, 1865.

<sup>39</sup> J. E. MacGowan, "Chattanooga, Tennessee," in *East Tennessee, Historical and Biographical*, p. 183; Wiltse Manuscript, p. 722.



## CHAPTER XIV

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### *Road to Reunion*

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IN the years before the war, Chattanooga had been tolerated or ignored or praised in a paternal sort of way by the older or larger towns of the Southeast, but with the close of the conflict this attitude began to change. From Atlanta and Mobile, from Knoxville and Nashville, came expressions of indignation about the little country junction point, which, though it had not yet grown out of its muddy streets, had the effrontery to challenge in various ways more important and larger places.

The battle of Chickamauga and the campaigns about Chattanooga made the latter widely known in the country. Articles about the war usually contained some interesting details about the town. With peace, it became a lodestone for veterans of both armies, who in riding and marching through the area had seen the forest and mineral resources of the mountains. Strategic discussions had brought to their attention the excellent transportation facilities of the community. In search of a new opportunity, they settled at Chattanooga.

Although a place of apparent potentialities, it retained in the decade or so after the war, many of the aspects of the frontier town. It was a community of young men whose thoughts were pointed to the future. Although some social and political differences naturally existed among them, their determination to work together in the cause of their community was evidence of a mutual interest in material opportunity. Moreover the neighborly attitude of a small town, so frequently caught in flood, fire, epidemic, and panic, knit them closely together. Chattanooga's citizens, whatever their past experiences had been, developed a spirit of harmony which could not be discouraged and stood in bold and striking contrast to the bitter differ-



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ences which were so frequently exhibited, regionally and nationally.

For a dozen years after the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, the South generally suffered under the heavy load of Reconstruction. Its radiating influences ate viciously at mutual understanding, and its fruits were more bitter than war, itself. Tennessee was more fortunate than her sister states of the Confederacy in this period. She was the first state readmitted to the Union and consequently escaped military rule and other harsh phases of the tragic era, which were thrust upon the Southern states by the radicals of Congress.

Within the state, the Brownlow administration, which was radical in sympathy, was in control. It was early challenged, however, by conservative elements, both within and without the ranks of the Republicans. The issue assumed such proportions that the radicals had to arrest two conservatives of the legislature, carry them to Nashville, and hold them in the legislative chambers, to gain a quorum in the session at which the Fourteenth Amendment to the Federal Constitution was ratified. The ratification was a necessary preliminary to Tennessee's readmission to statehood, which followed in the summer of 1866.

The Brownlow machine, however, which was dominated by East Tennessee Unionists, was not entirely sympathetic to the freedman's cause. Despite its apparent tie-up with the radical element nationally, it did not extend civil prerogatives to the colored group until political expediency dictated that it be done. In 1866, the Negro was granted the right to appear as a witness in court and to have full legal protection for his life and property, but another year elapsed before he was allowed to vote, and it was not until 1868 that he could serve on juries or hold public office.

Early in 1869, Governor Brownlow gave up the governorship to take a seat in the United States Senate, and virtually every appearance of Reconstruction came to an end in Tennessee. DeWitt C. Senter, speaker of the State Senate, succeeded Brownlow as governor and immediately moved to accomplish universal male suffrage, white and black. Within a year, a constitutional convention was held, and a new frame of government was drafted and accepted by the voters of the state. Thus all the disabilities of the onetime Confederate soldier or sympathizer were removed by 1870.

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Chattanooga did not wait for state action to allow Negroes the privilege of voting and holding office locally. In the election of 1866, for members of Board of Mayor and Aldermen, Negroes voted without discrimination, according to one of the local editors, and helped to elect "straightout radicals." In the election for the same offices the next year, a Negro was chosen alderman and allowed to take his seat, although after some controversy. These elections reflected more than the typical battles between ins and outs, or even the major political issues of the period. The first board was composed largely of old residents, but the election of 1866 saw a slate containing newcomers offered to the electorate. The result led to a dispute. In the period of argument, the old board continued to meet and legislate for the town, while the new one, which was finally declared the winner, also organized.<sup>1</sup>

Although the members of this board were locally regarded as radicals, generally sympathetic to the Brownlow machine, they shortly found themselves in conflict with the latter's chief instrument of control, the Metropolitan Police. This force was created by an act of the legislature following a race riot in Memphis. Ostensibly, its purpose was to prevent repetitions of such outbreaks. According to the law, the commissioners and officers of the Metropolitan Police had complete jurisdiction over police administration in three cities of the state—Memphis, Nashville, and Chattanooga. As the governor held the power of appointment to the force, local authorities were without control over law enforcement. Yet all the expenses of the force were paid from taxes levied on the residents of the communities.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Chattanooga American Union*, December 10, 1867, January 7, 1868; *City of Chattanooga, Mayor and Aldermen, Minutes*, 1865-1868, pp. 145-156, 315, 319-322. It is interesting to note that the minute book of the board for the period carries reports of the meetings of both groups, with those of the new Board recorded after the book was turned over to it.

<sup>2</sup> State of Tennessee: *Acts Passed at the Second Session of the 34th General Assembly*, 1865-1866, pp. 52-62 *Acts Passed at the Special Session of the 34th General Assembly*, 1866, pp. 17-19. *Chattanooga Weekly American Union*, Feb. 27, 1867. The editor said that Chattanooga was included in the Metropolitan Police act under the leadership of A. M. Cate, state Senator from the district, "in order to prevent the benighted residents . . . from voting wrong."

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According to the editor of the opposition paper, the *American Union*, the mayor and his associates owed their election to the ability of the Metropolitan Police to marshal the Negro votes. Nevertheless they determined to test the legality of forcing the city to pay the salaries of men who were essentially officers of the state. Interestingly enough, the city authorities, who were Unionists, employed the ex-Confederate officer, D. M. Key, to represent the municipality in the case. The decision went against them and was immediately appealed. Moreover, the city authorities levied no taxes to cover salaries for the police, a policy which was followed by succeeding administrations. When the Supreme Court of the state finally acted on the matter in 1873 by upholding the decision of the lower courts, the town found itself saddled with its heaviest reconstruction debt.<sup>3</sup>

It is unquestionable that the Metropolitan Police were used for political purposes. The mustering of Negro votes by them has been noted, and occasionally residents with a background of Confederate sympathy complained that they could not secure adequate police protection. Only once, apparently, was there need for the police to protect a Negro, the reason given by Brownlow for the creation of the force. And then, they might not have succeeded had they not received help from an unexpected quarter. A Negro killed a merchant some distance out of town. In his ignorance, he put on the bloody coat of his victim, which made him easily recognizable by the two men who arrested him. When he and his captors reached the town's limits, they were met by members of the police, who took him in charge. The brother of the murdered man, as soon as he heard of the capture, ran hysterically through the streets, brandishing the blood-stained club which the murderer had used, and calling for help to lynch the Negro. The Metropolitan Police drew their pistols and held the crowd, which quickly gathered, from the door of the jail. They were aided in diverting it by the quick thinking of the chief engineer of a fire company, appropriately called The New Era. A new engine had just been received, more powerful than any the

<sup>3</sup> *City of Chattanooga, Mayor and Aldermen, Minutes*, 1865-1868, p. 203; *Chattanooga American Union*, October 29, November 10, 1867; *Chattanooga Times*, April 20, 1873.



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town had seen. Possibly the engineer had been seeking an opportunity to display it, and here was a crowd gathered for the show. Whatever his reasoning, he and the company ran the engine out. They laid 900 feet of hose to the nearest well and within thirteen minutes, they had water shooting from the nozzle. The display created so much interest and excitement that the lynching was forgot. The police took advantage of the opportunity and carried the murderer to the county jail at Harrison, where he remained until brought to trial.<sup>4</sup>

The country as a whole was perplexed by its postwar problems. The National Reconstruction acts and carpetbag legislatures precipitated difficulties for the Southern states, while the increasing controversy between President Johnson and Congress hindered national administration. As this culminated in the impeachment and trial of Johnson, its influence showed in the President's native state. The division there became somewhat different from that which existed before 1860. Although Brownlow reverted to his earlier opposition to Johnson and was followed by extreme elements in the state, more conservative men inclined to the support of the Chief Executive. In Chattanooga, public meetings, in which ex-Federals and ex-Confederates sat together, were held in approval of the President's policies. The immediate enfranchisement of all former Confederates was advocated. This had the support of such typical Unionists as Colonel William Clift, who wrote a letter to the *American Union* in which he said, "There is no one more anxious to advance the white man's party than I am." The editor of the paper expressed the general desire of Chattanoogaans for harmonious relations when he wrote: "Speaking for ourselves and those who like us desired the success of the Union cause and perilled our lives for it in battle . . . now that the war is over, [we] desire to have peace and an honest and friendly Union, in fact as well as name, [with] those who contended so long and well for a cause which we must do them the justice to say they believed to be right, whatever we may think about it. . . ."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> *Chattanooga American Union*, Nov. 10, 1867.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, January 3, 8, 15, 17, February 12, March 1, 7, 1868.

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The radicals were not without support in the community, but the major portion of it apparently came from the freedmen. This element advocated Grant's candidacy in 1868, and when the votes were counted after the November election, he won over his opponent, Seymour, in the county by 1,273 to 393. The election was as quiet and orderly as it was decisive.<sup>6</sup>

Where 1,666 voters cast ballots in the Presidential election of 1868 in Hamilton County, 2,728 went to the polls in 1872. This was not due to an increase in population so much as to the change in the eligibility of voters. Ex-Confederates participated in 1872. The latter fact did not, however, disturb the control of Chattanooga by the Republican party. Federal soldiers or supporters usually won city elections, and John T. Wilder was chosen mayor in 1871. He commanded the Federal troops who fired on the community from across the river in the Chickamauga campaign. After the war, he returned to Chattanooga to become one of the most important figures in the creation of its new industrial economy. In the 1871 election, he defeated Thomas Webster, one of the older residents. "It was deemed appropriate," a writer who signed himself "Rebel" wrote to one of the papers, "that he should be elected mayor of the free choice of the people of Chattanooga, to show that no bitterness engendered by the war remains in our hearts."<sup>7</sup>

Wilder's interest was not in politics, however, and he shortly resigned the office. Like many of his fellows, he wished to devote his efforts to the economic development of the area. This could be accomplished by the attraction to the South of men and wealth. Though the Brownlow administration had possibly more of a political motive than any other in its campaign to bring immigrants to the state, Chattanooga joined the effort because they realized that by securing the proper sort of new citizens the potentialities of the state's resources could be more quickly realized. The *Daily Republi-*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Jan. 18, Nov. 8, 1868, Goodspeed, *op. cit.*, p. 830. The report of one of the meetings of the radical group states that an estimated 60 Negroes and 20 whites were present.

<sup>7</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, Nov. 16, 1871. Although direct evidence is lacking, it is apparent that Wilder, though a Republican, was not regarded as a radical.

## Road to Reunion

can carried on its front page for approximately one month the following advertisement:

WANTED IMMEDIATELY ANY NUMBER OF CARPET-BAGGERS  
TO COME TO CHATTANOOGA AND SETTLE

The people of Chattanooga, no longer wishing to stay in the background, and feeling the necessity of immediately developing the vast mineral resources surrounding them, by which they can place themselves on the high road to wealth, prosperity and power, extend a GENERAL INVITATION to all CARPET-BAGGERS to leave the bleak winds of the North and come to CHATTANOOGA.

It is unnecessary to repeat what is universally known, that our climate is mild and healthful; our soil fertile, and our mineral resources and railroad facilities unequalled in the world.

Those who wish to come can be assured they will NOT BE REQUIRED TO RENOUNCE THEIR POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS TENETS, as the jurisdiction of the Ku Klux and other vermin does not extend over these parts.

Persons wishing to immigrate will be furnished detailed information concerning any business, by addressing Box 123, Chattanooga, Tennessee.

### VOX POPULI

P. S. Those having capital, brains and muscle preferred.<sup>8</sup>

The business section of Chattanooga in the latter part of the sixties displayed the need for new capital. It was still practically limited to Market Street between the river and Ninth Street. The architecture of the scattered buildings was occasionally criticized for being without "any possible reference to taste and convenience." The editor of the *Athens Post* remarked, after a visit in 1868, that the "spirit of improvement does not seem to be exercising a very large control." He also pointed out that "a portion of the buildings begin to look time-worn and seedy." A more unfriendly account said that "two thirds of the houses are miserable, board shantys with clay chimneys," a description which was challenged by the editor of the *Daily Republican*. Even he, however, had his critical moments, as when he reprehended the location of a "long row of drinking saloons, which are not by any means distinguished by their appearance," yet which struck the eye of the visitor almost as soon as he stepped off the train.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> *Chattanooga Republican*, the advertisement appeared first on Dec. 8, 1868.

<sup>9</sup> *Chattanooga Republican*, November 5, December 10, 1868, April 9, 1869.



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The streets of the town and the roads leading to it displayed the same proximity to frontier conditions that the buildings did. Some critics remarked that Chattanooga could be changed "from a mud-hole to a sea of dust" quicker than any other place known. Market Street had been abused by both armies and was badly in need of repair. It was likened to the old man's mule, which got steadily "wusser from wear." All the streets were either ankle-deep in mud or dust, with stepping stones at corners for the use of pedestrians. When two jewelers erected coal-oil lamps in front of their places of business, one of the editors remarked that they would "certainly be appreciated in the dark, muddy nights during the coming winter."

Farmers, who traded at Chattanooga, proceeded over miserable dirt roads. The one which led from the Lookout Mountain area became almost impassable in the spring because of a large mudhole, which "spread itself after the fashion of a setting hen" across the road. The editor of the *Daily Republican* deplored such conditions. "From field to market," he wrote, "there should be but few hills, and no quagmires, or loose sand, to impede the passage of vehicles. The farmer should be enabled to reach the market without difficulty, delay or damage to his animals or wagon. Good roads and unrestricted trade make great cities. This is one of the wants of Chattanooga."

The condition of the local roads was not entirely due to lack of interest. Almost weekly the newspapers noted the passage through the town of drovers with their herds of mules, cattle, and hogs. Originating in East Tennessee or Kentucky, they moved down the valleys to Chattanooga on their way to Georgia and Alabama. They were a great factor in the creation of the bad state of both the roads leading to and from the town and the streets within its limits. Thousands of hooves cut the dirt surface, particularly when wet with winter rains. Such conditions, the newspapers warned, were harmful to health. They indicated "wealth to doctors and bankruptcy to life insurance companies," and could only result in frightening away from Chattanooga people with capital or energy.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> *Chattanooga Republican*, November 19, December 8, 1867, January 7, April 1, 7, 25, August 18, September 12, 1868, January 31, March 9, 29, 1869; *Chattanooga American Union*, November 8, 1867.

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Despite the fears of the papers, the number of persons who came to Chattanooga steadily increased. Whether they had capital or not is another matter. Some of them did. W. P. Rathburn and T. G. Montague were among the latter. They arrived from Pomeroy, Ohio, in 1865 and organized the First National Bank. But the majority, so the editor of the *Times* later stated, "were, as a general thing, poor in the world's goods. But rich in youth, health, strength and energy. Most . . . had been discharged from the Federal and Confederate armies. . . ." They came from a number of states and foreign countries. The twelve doctors, who made Chattanooga their home by 1870, illustrate by the places of their birth how scattered the origins of the population were. Three were prewar Chattanoogans and two others were also natives of Tennessee. Of the seven remaining, one each was from Ohio, Kentucky, New Hampshire, Western New York State, Florida, Germany, and England.<sup>11</sup>

An important reason for the success of Chattanooga in attracting newcomers was the belief that it had an undoubted future and a man could have "a reasonable expectation of growing with it." Furthermore, he could find a more tolerant attitude than was evident in most Southern communities. The newspapers constantly admonished their readers to welcome all but "political adventurers." "What we need," the editor of the *Daily Republican* stated, "[is] not politicians and statesmen . . . but enterprising men to build up every branch of industry." When such men came, the paper continued, they should be received as friends and co-workers. "Unless we are willing to accord to Northern immigrants every right, privilege and courtesy that we ask for ourselves, we had better not invite them to settle among us."<sup>12</sup>

It is possible that this definite warning that men who wished to exploit the political opportunity, created by the disturbed situation in the South, were not wanted in Chattanooga served to keep out the corrupt "carpetbaggers" and "scalawags," who made other communities notorious. Another preventive was the lack of wealth. Work

<sup>11</sup> *Chattanooga Republican*, October 23, November 11, 1868; *Chattanooga Times*, February 27, 1873.

<sup>12</sup> *Chattanooga Republican*, January 5, November 28, 1868, March 9, 1869.

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was the key to opportunity at Chattanooga, and work was too slow and hard a road for the political adventurer. To call the men who came to Chattanooga after the close of the war carpetbaggers is inappropriate, inasmuch as the word for that period has an association of corruption. The new Chattanoogaans were not transients, nor did they expropriate existing institutions. They brought capital, or they brought energy and technical training. They came as pioneers. They planned to open a new region economically, and they intended to make their homes there, in spite of its raw appearance.

One important argument for the future growth of Chattanooga was, of course, its excellent position on railroad and river. With the war's end, traffic on the river resumed. The boats which had been built for army use were converted to commercial purposes, and in the period when navigation was sure, the wharf at Chattanooga was a busy place. Steamboats came and went, laden with quantities of corn, the principal cargo, wheat, hay, bacon, and other country produce. Flatboats were pulled up alongside the steamers at the wharf, while long rafts of logs arrived to furnish material for the lumber mills. The *Knoxville Whig* noted in a deploring tone that Chattanooga was too frequently the destination of the river craft rather than Knoxville.

A few barges, which brought coal from the mines at Sale Creek, a mailboat which plied downstream, and a local tradeboat, the "chicken wagon" of the river, which served the rural people, were also frequent visitors at Chattanooga's wharf. All the traffic suffered, however, from the limitations of the river, which still confined most of the use to the area above Chattanooga and that to the season when there was sufficient water.

These two circumstances—the amount of trade when the river was high, and the difficulty of using it at other times—combined to give new life to the perennial agitation for improvement. Additional interest was created by a survey by the Army Corps of Engineers. At a meeting of Chattanooga's "most enterprising and public spirited citizens," resolutions were passed stating that the removal of obstacles to navigation from Tumbling Shoals through Muscle Shoals was "of vital importance to the people of Tennessee and Alabama." The members of the meeting chose a committee which was to organize



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a convention to be held in Chattanooga. The city authorities joined by appropriating money for necessary expenses.<sup>13</sup>

The convention met March 18, 1868, with delegates, including forty who represented Chattanooga, in attendance from the river communities of Tennessee and Alabama. Resolutions were passed, stating that the river should be cleared from its head to its mouth, and since it was of national importance the work should be done by the Federal Government.<sup>14</sup> This was a reiteration of the position assumed by earlier advocates; bitter conflict involving the issue of states' rights had not altered the appeal. The result was the inclusion of the Tennessee in the River and Harbor appropriations bill, and the *Daily Republican* proudly called attention to a dredge, when it was placed in operation near Chattanooga. "We may soon expect to see it tearing the bottom out of the Tennessee," the editor remarked.

Even such evidence of Federal interest was not completely satisfying, for shortly after the dredge appeared, a second large meeting to keep the matter alive was held in Chattanooga.<sup>15</sup> Between these and succeeding meetings, the press kept up a constant agitation of the subject, and it was recommended that petitions from every county in Tennessee should be sent to congressmen. It was even contended that opening the river would put a quietus on the Ku Klux Klan, as the appropriation of money for this purpose would demonstrate that Congress and the Federal Government planned to help and not injure the Southern states.

Success apparently attended these efforts, as in 1875 work on the Muscle Shoals canal was started by the Federal Government. The river enthusiasts, however, continued to meet and discuss their favorite project. At a major convention, which was held in Chattanooga, December 5, 1877, they reiterated their conviction of national importance, basing their argument on the fact that the Tennessee bound "together all by the ligaments of commerce, and the work

<sup>13</sup> *Chattanooga American Union*, Oct. 31, 1867, Jan. 28, Feb. 8, 1868; *Chattanooga Republican*, Feb. 8, 1868; *City of Chattanooga, Mayor and Aldermen, Minutes*, 1865-1868, pp. 342, 354.

<sup>14</sup> *Chattanooga American Union*, March 19, 1868. *Chattanooga Republican* March 19, 1868.

<sup>15</sup> *Chattanooga Republican*, January 3; February 25, 1869.

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of its improvement, therefore, can be no less national in character than that which guards against a national foe."<sup>16</sup>

The interest displayed in regard to the improvement of the river did not mean that Chattanoogaans planned to neglect railroads. All the main lines into the town were operating again. Some difficulty had developed between the city authorities at Chattanooga and the Western and Atlantic Railroad over trackage rights between Ninth Street and the river on Railroad Avenue. This precipitated a perplexing situation, inasmuch as the railroad was still operated as well as owned by the state of Georgia, which contested the city's authority over its right of way. On December 16, 1867, a gang of workmen, acting under a city ordinance, went about the task of removing the tracks. They were arrested and charged with "maliciously tearing up the rails," and were bound over by a justice of peace to the circuit court. They left the justice's office and immediately returned to their work. This time, the mayor and the city marshal were also arrested. The effort was suspended and the issue fought in the courts until the Supreme Court of Tennessee decided in favor of the city. Even so, the argument did not subside, for both parties have claimed that the removal of the tracks was done at their instigation.<sup>17</sup>

Another matter affecting a railroad was the cause of a different sort of worry for the town fathers. The bonds for the subscription to the stock of the Wills Valley Railroad, to which the town had committed itself before the war, were still outstanding. Dogged by the financial issue and troubled by the fact that the railroad was far from completed, the city transferred its interests to an outside group for little more than a promise to resume construction. In 1868, this company and the Northeast and Southwest Company of Alabama were consolidated and called the Alabama and Chattanooga Railroad. One of the notorious figures of Reconstruction, John C. Stanton, was a principal in this merger. With his brother, D. M. Stanton, he manipulated to secure millions of dollars from the Alabama state

<sup>16</sup> Tennessee Valley Authority, *op. cit.*, p. 98; *Chattanooga Times*, Dec. 6, 1877.

<sup>17</sup> *City of Chattanooga, Mayor and Aldermen, Minutes*, 1865-168, p. 306; *Chattanooga American Union*, Dec. 17, 1867; *Chattanooga News*, Sept. 29, 1906, quoting Tomlinson Fort; Johnston, *op. cit.*, p. 86-87. Johnston says there is doubt as to when the tracks were taken up and by whom.

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treasury, supposedly to complete the railroad. As one of the terminals was in Chattanooga, he became interested in the town, and some of the money went into the construction of a lavish hotel near the terminal site.

These promotions of Stanton created "lively times" in Chattanooga. They also served to draw the attention of people to a subdivision near the terminal and hotel. He used spectacular methods to secure interest. He made a contract with the Six Companies, a Chinese Corporation of San Francisco, to furnish coolie labor for the railroad. At another time, he sent a band of singing Negroes to parade the streets of Chattanooga in an effort to attract colored laborers. So infectious was his enthusiasm that no one apparently hesitated to take the railroad scrip with which he made all payments. He "fairly floated enterprises on a sea of credit."

When Stanton ran into trouble over the bonds which were granted by an Alabama Reconstruction legislature, and the state took over the railroad as a consequence, Chattanooga entered a major economic decline. The holders of the scrip and other creditors of Stanton joined to create the "most extensive crop of litigation which Chattanooga ever harvested." The promoter cleverly maneuvered to delay proceedings, and in the long run the lawyers were the principal beneficiaries.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> In spite of his unethical practices, not too uncommon at the time, Stanton was very popular with the townspeople, many of whom defended him and praised his work for the community. He remained in Chattanooga for some years after the deflation of his schemes, and the hotel which bore his name was a center of social activity and a source of pride to the community into the twentieth century. The Alabama and Chattanooga Railroad, after it was seized by the state of Alabama in 1871, went through a long period of involved litigation. Finally, it was purchased by a syndicate of foreign investors, headed by Baron Emile Erlanger, and in 1877 was reorganized as the Alabama Great Southern. Erlanger's interest in the road was created by his wife, a daughter of John Slidell, who had represented the Confederate states in France. On a visit to Chattanooga in 1889, Erlanger made a generous donation toward the erection of a new hospital, which was immediately christened the Baroness Erlanger Hospital.

*City of Chattanooga, Mayor and Aldermen, Minutes, 1865-1868*, pp. 179-181; J. W. Dubose, *Alabama's Tragic Decade*, edited by J. K. Greer, pp. 181-186; W. L. Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, p. 594; A. B. Moore, "Railroad Building in Alabama during the Reconstruction Period," *Journal of Southern History*, I, 427-434; *Chattanooga Times*, October 29, 1911, article by Judge Lewis Shepherd.



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Chattanooga's railroad history had been a lively one, as the experience with Stanton exemplified. Its origin was in a state enterprise, the Western and Atlantic, which acted as a lodestone to attract others. These, however, were all private stock companies, although they were helped by both state and municipal governments. The rivalry, which developed between Cincinnati and Louisville after 1865, led to another form of railroad activity in which Chattanooga shared. At the end of the war, Cincinnati was dependent on rail facilities which led through Louisville for its connection with Southern areas. This placed Cincinnati forwarding houses at the mercy of their Louisville rivals, who held up shipments by bribery and other means. The Ohio city determined to win her freedom from these mercantile difficulties by constructing her own railroad, and Chattanooga, after consideration, was chosen for the Southern terminal.

Knoxville was the chief competitor, and Chattanooga newspapers and citizens united to present the advantages of their community over its rival. When word came on June 7, 1869, that Chattanooga had been chosen, a grand turnout at the city hall was staged "of citizens anxious to testify their joy at the selection by Cincinnati of this place as the Southern terminus of the Great Southern Trunk Railroad. The meeting was ushered in by the booming of cannon and illuminated by a gorgeous display of fireworks."<sup>19</sup> As in the instance of the Western and Atlantic, rival communities and other conflicting interests attempted to have the proposed route altered, and Chattanooga had to remain alert to resist such efforts. All threats were defeated as they arose, and again Chattanooga was benefited by a transportation facility promoted and constructed by outside interests.

Outwardly, there was little change in Chattanooga's commercial activity after the war from that which had existed before. Small retail shops, wholesale and commission merchants, and a few processing plants were still evidence of the simple economy of the frontier. Some of the larger storekeepers made trips to Eastern markets,

<sup>19</sup> *Chattanooga Republican*, May 15, 20, June 8, 1869. Cincinnati bore the full cost of the construction of this railroad, which led to some interesting legal problems. The state of Kentucky resisted the right of a municipality to claim right of way in another state and the threat of Federal intervention was necessary to clear the matter up.

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especially New York, and proudly advertised that fact when the new merchandise arrived. One of them, the impetuous William Crutchfield, offered a highly diversified stock including "Yankee notions." Another firm, a partnership composed of an Indianian and a Georgian, concentrated on agricultural implements and apparently did a fair business in everything from "hoes to threshers."

Interest had not subsided, however, in manufacturing, although most of the firms which had been organized before the war had disappeared. Sawmills and furniture factories were the basis of the town's economic effort, while grist and flouring mills did a moderate business. But it was the iron industry which began to seize the imaginations of newcomers, in particular, and built the foundations for the future industrial activity of Chattanooga. Thomas Webster and S. B. Lowe, who had operated plants before 1861, returned and reopened their businesses, but they were greatly overshadowed by the rolling mill which the Federal Government had completed in the fall of 1865. This plant was leased to John A. Spooner of Massachusetts, who assigned his interest to the Southwestern Iron Company. This organization which was dominated by the New York ironmaster, Abram Hewitt, then purchased the plant from the government.

Hewitt's investment in this enterprise was prompted in part by his desire to assist the South in its economic recovery and to set an example for other Northern men of capital. An ex-major general of the Confederacy, Gustavus W. Smith, was chosen as general manager of the plant and other Southern men were drawn into the organization. At first the operation proved more profitable than expected, but by 1868 business began to slump. The plant was equipped only to rework old rails and not enough such scrap could be obtained to run at its capacity of 300 tons a week. One consequence was the merging of this company with the Roane Iron Company in 1870.<sup>20</sup>

The Roane Iron Company was incorporated in 1867 by a group whose interest was secured by John T. Wilder and Hiram S. Chamberlain, the latter also an ex-Federal officer who had served in East Tennessee. Wilder, whose experience as a cavalry leader in the war

<sup>20</sup> Allan Nevins, *Abram S. Hewitt*, pp. 252-253; Chamberlain, *Morrow, A Brief History of the Pig Iron Industry of East Tennessee*, pp. 6-7.

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had acquainted him with the favorable conjunction of iron ore and coal in Roane County, had been engaged in the iron industry in Indiana before 1861. Chamberlain had left college in 1861 to join the army, but as soon as he was demobilized, he became a partner in a small rolling mill in Knoxville. In 1865, Wilder invited Chamberlain to accompany him on a prospecting trip in the saddle to view the deposits he had noted in Roane County. Chamberlain's agreement about the possibilities caused them to plan for the organization of the company to utilize the opportunity. Wilder won the interest of a group of Midwesterners, who agreed to finance the project. The largest investor was W. O. Rockwood, and the village which grew up around the furnace was named for him. In three years, the plant was in operation, using raw coal to smelt the ore, the first time such fuel was used south of the Ohio river.<sup>21</sup>

The juxtaposition of the Southwestern and Roane plants within seventy miles of each other—one, a rolling mill without a furnace, and the other, a furnace without a rolling mill—led to the merger of the two as the Roane Iron Company. Robert Somers, who visited Chattanooga in 1870, wrote: "The construction of the Alabama and Chattanooga Railroad, the new life given to the Rolling Mills by an enterprising and successful company, and the increased importance attached to the mineral resources of the district, have all tended to enhance the value of property and give great briskness to trade and labour. From a little nest of shanties, Chattanooga is struggling forward rapidly. . . ." Another traveler was equally optimistic, but, he said, "One cannot repress a fear that some day all [its] natural beauties will be hidden by the smoke from the five hundred chimneys which will be erected in honor of the god Iron. For it is to be a town of rolling-mills and furnaces, giant in its traffic, like Pittsburgh and St. Louis, and inhabited by thousands of hard-handed, brawny armed artisans."<sup>22</sup>

This enthusiasm for the future of the town and the surrounding mineral area sounded good in the ears of Chattanoogaans, who were

<sup>21</sup> J. M. Safford, *Geology of Tennessee*, p. v.

<sup>22</sup> Robert Somers, *The Southern States Since the War*, pp. 103, 106-107; Edward King, *The Southern States of North America*, p. 532.



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not at all backward, themselves, at blowing their horn. Additional impetus was given their optimism by the appearance of prospectors from Pittsburgh, who registered at the local hotels. It would be easy to exaggerate all these evidences of interest in Chattanooga and its future, but the truth is that it was still but little more than a straggling village. It was, however, the largest town in Hamilton County, and, in 1870, by a referendum was made the county seat. The census of that year shows that it had a total of 6,903 residents.<sup>23</sup> Among them, though, were levelheaded businessmen like Chamberlain as well as speculative promoters like Wilder. These two, who came to Chattanooga to live at the organization of the Roane Iron Company to participate in its management, were a contrast in many ways. Both were sturdy, vigorous men, although Wilder was much the taller. Chamberlain was quiet and studious. His interest, once it was committed, was steadfast. Wilder, on the other hand, was always launching new enterprises, which he could dream up at the slightest opportunity. Furthermore, his enthusiasm could always secure supporters for his projects, although sometimes it led him into extravagant claims. Once when he was conducting an English nobleman over some minerals lands, he was asked, "How far downward does this vein of ore extend?" His immediate reply was, "The Devil is now making iron from the bottom of it."

Nevertheless, the numerous talks he gave and the papers and articles he wrote were filled with statistics and information which testified to his knowledge and were an important factor in advertising the area. His choice by the governor of the state to be Commissioner for Tennessee to an exposition in Vienna was, consequently, a natural one. Armed with samples of ores and other materials which might catch the eye of European investors, he made his way to the old city on the Danube, undisturbed by the newness of the region he represented. He returned with an award stating that Tennessee stood in first place in the exposition as a "mineral state."<sup>24</sup> Though this may

<sup>23</sup> Actually, the population of the community only began to catch up with its reputation and renown in the third decade of the twentieth century, a growth which has been accentuated to a remarkable degree by the coming of the Tennessee Valley Authority in 1934.

<sup>24</sup> S. C. Williams, *General John T. Wilder, Commander of the Lightning Brigade*, p. 43; *Chattanooga Times*, March 13, September 6, 1873.

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have occasioned some surprise in other areas, Chattanooga found in it only confirmation of their steadfast conviction.

The Roane Iron Company added to this feeling when it shortly grew to dominate the industrial life of the community. With its "latest improved" machinery, it stood as a symbol of a new day. By 1878 it was capitalized at one million dollars. Its two blast furnaces at Rockwood had a capacity of sixty tons of pig iron per day, a large proportion of which was sent to Chattanooga, where the mills at full capacity employed about 600 men and produced large quantities of rail for the growing system of railroads.

Other small plants came into being and added to the town's interest in iron.<sup>25</sup> The *Iron Age*, the important recorder of trade facts, opened an office in town. Neither modesty nor fear of competition induced restraint in letting the world know what Chattanooga was doing. Conscious of the advances made and jubilant over the prospects of the future, those who planned the celebration of the Fourth of July, 1878, made Vulcan and the spirit of the New South their theme. The first float in the parade carried a sign, "Cotton Was King." It was followed by a second bearing the pronouncement, "Iron Is King Now." "Coal Is Prime Minister" proclaimed a third.

The belief in the victory of iron over cotton did not extend to a disinterest in factories to process the fiber. When Joseph Ruohs announced his intention in 1873 to construct a cotton mill, the newspapers received the news with the enthusiastic attention they gave every addition to the community. Three years later, Wildberger, Peyer and Company erected another small textile plant, and the Chattanooga Knitting Company began to make men's and women's hose. However, none of these plants was able to operate for any length of time.

<sup>25</sup> In addition to the Roane Iron Company, the following firms were in business in 1878: The Vulcan Iron and Rail Works, The Chattanooga Iron Company, Wason Car Foundry Company, Chattanooga Pipe and Machine Works, Tennessee Iron and Steel Company, Etna Foundry and Machine Works, Providence Steel Works, Southern Pump and Pipe Company, Chattanooga Saw Works, The Novelty Machine Works, Enterprise Machine Works, Chattanooga Boiler Factory, Chickasaw Iron and Brass Foundry. This listing is from the *Chattanooga City Directory and Business Gazeteer, 1878-79*, pp. 116-118.

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Anything which added to the economic strength of the community was sought. Men of ability continued to be welcomed, regardless of place of origin or sympathy in the war. General Wilder stated the latter when he told a group of visiting newspapermen: "Chattanooga is not a Southern city nor a Northern city. . . . One's politics, religion or section is not called into question here. This is the freest town on the map. All join together here for the general good and strive, to a man, for the upbuilding of the city."<sup>26</sup> It was a typical attitude of the American frontier. Men were looked upon from the point of view of their possible contribution to the developing society rather than what they might have been at some other place or time.

It was not, of course, exclusively true. There were differences among them. Some men who wished success through political advantage rather than their own efforts agitated issues which had been determined by the outcome of the war. Democrats continued to be Democrats, and Republicans, Republicans, and many of the women, who suffered more quietly in the struggle and thereby had its emotions graven more deeply upon them, could not forget which color uniform a man had worn. But the men were largely willing to let bygones be bygones. Stimulated by a common interest in the material opportunity their town afforded, ex-Confederates and ex-Federals, whether from East Tennessee or north of the Mason and Dixon line, joined hands to create in Chattanooga a Southern industrial town.

The philosophy of materialism which called on all to co-operate knitted the diverse elements of the community. Representative ex-Confederates such as Tomlinson Fort, D. M. Key, and Thomas Crutchfield had the same attitude about this as Wilder, Chamberlain, and Montague. They knew that if any one would prosper, all must build together. In other words, community interest and personal interest were synonymous. As pioneers, the men of industry did not reflect on the past. Their work was for tomorrow, and as it was heavily weighted by the economic, any social or political difference was submerged. In order to pull an oar more strongly for Chattanooga, they formed a Board of Trade in 1870. Its officers represented all the manufacturing elements of the population. This was also true of the

<sup>26</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, January 11, 1884.



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more important Iron, Coal and Manufacturers' Association, which succeeded the original organization six years later.

This spirit of co-operation was made easier and more meaningful under the leadership of the ex-Confederate officer, Jonathan Waverly Bachman, who came to be known as the "Pastor of Chattanooga." Of Tennessee ancestry, his family was one of those divided by the conflict, and so he knew the worst side of fratricidal war. When he became pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in 1873, he began his service, not only to his congregation but to the town. A young minister in a community made up largely of young men, he advanced to all, no matter what the denomination or former view, the idea of harmony among men, faith in God, and a patriotic belief in a reunited country.

There was constant need of both faith and harmony in the adversities which at times faced the town's residents. One of these—the great flood of 1867—was too powerful and too quickly upon the town for anything to be done about it except to clean up after it. No observations of either the weather or the state of the river were then made, but contemporaries have recorded that the winter saw repeated heavy snowfalls over the watershed of the Tennessee. When the snow began to melt, heavy rains fell in the same area. As the river rose in its upper reaches, lowlands were inundated everywhere. Knoxville suffered heavy damage as the flood waters moved downstream. Chattanooga apparently had no definite word of the proportions of the mighty torrent. Although some cautious people moved to high ground on Missionary Ridge and Lookout Mountain, the residents as a whole took no special precautions. While the town was at rest on Friday night, March 8, the destructive waters, carrying freight of every conceivable type, including buildings, boxes, barrels, and others debris, spread through the community. Along the downtown streets, the flood rose with such astonishing rapidity that when guests in the Crutchfield House were aroused, the first floor contained five feet of water. Residents in the low-lying outskirts had to take to their roofs to await rescue.

Not until Monday was the crest reached. On the present gauge, it would have lapped upon the 58.6 foot reading, the greatest flood on the Tennessee River ever recorded. From Cherry to Pine streets, the

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unleashed river was in control. Its waters poured out of town into the country, although no one knew "where the current did set to." Nearly every building on the river bank was swept away, including several rather large sawmills. Merchandise on the shelves and in the basement of stores was damaged, and numerous small structures were destroyed or floated away on the flood. Railroad beds were badly washed; platform cars floated off their carriages. The bridge which the Union Army had presented to the town was swept away.

Venetianlike scenes were common within the community. Men in skiffs hurried about removing stranded persons and pets. Others tried to salvage merchandise from high shelves in their places of business. Captain Woods Wilson, master of the little steamer, *Cherokee*, decided to join in the rescue work and boldly steamed up Market Street as far as Fifth, where the mayor hailed him from the hillside, requesting that he go no further, as the churning wheel might create waves which would break the moorings of some of the submerged buildings. The steamboat was backed down street to the place it was normally supposed to be.

Captain Wilson could not sit still. Water was the place for a steamboat, and flood or not he put the *Cherokee* on the crest, loaded with passengers who had been detained in Chattanooga. Downstream they headed; the tide did the rest. In less than two hours, they tied up at Bridgeport, fifty miles away. A crew member wrote of the experience in the normally hazardous mountain stretch below Chattanooga:

With the river up some seventy to one hundred feet above normal in the mountain gap, the trip through the gorge was something that pen cannot describe. Streams pitching from cliffs and sparkling in the sunlight, the great river rushing headlong against mighty cliffs of rocks and its waters rebounding in columns and waves, great trees ramming and crashing the stone walls,—all this was indescribably thrilling and awe-inspiring. But there were dangers in that trip that we never thought of, or we never would have attempted it. Our boat was as helpless as a toy boat in that raging flood. The passengers, ignorant of impending dangers lurking on every side, were out on the top deck, admiring the beautiful scenery. The whole crew of the boat, realizing their helplessness, consulted in whispers. The boat was backing with all power on her wheel, but the current was carrying her on at almost railroad speed.

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Back in Chattanooga, clean-up chores began as the waters subsided, and the community pulled as a man to salvage property and to scrub away the mud that had been deposited everywhere. Atlanta, Louisville, and other cities dispatched donations of clothing and foodstuffs. A ferry was put in service to replace the lost bridge. Not until the last of May was the job completed. At that time, the city government ordered the marshal to sell "for cash in hand to the highest bidder, after five days notice, the House now standing on Chestnut Street (left there by the receding flood of last March) between Sixth and Seventh Streets. . . ." <sup>27</sup>

This flood is noteworthy because of its size and the damage it did, but it was merely another in a long series. In some years more than one occurred to plague the residents, who counted themselves extremely fortunate if a spring went by without at least one freshet. Nor were floods the only affliction, for disease and fire made their occasional appearance as they did in every other American town. In the event of fire, no mechanical alarm existed to warn the populace and the volunteer firemen. Instead, according to the report of one contemporary, "Everyone yelled 'Fire, fire!' Women screamed, children cried, horses became unmanageable and ran away, dogs barked, all the locomotives whistled incessantly and pandemonium reigned, which increased as the engine came lumbering and tottering over the rough and stony sts. behind a hundred feet of rope at which half a 100 citizens were tugging, grunting and swearing. . . . Right well did these payless firemen do their duty, and many a life was saved by them. The post of honor was always accorded him who first reached the engine and took the lead." <sup>28</sup>

In 1867, the foundry and shop of Thomas Webster and the Crutchfield House were lost in separate conflagrations. Four years later, a major blaze destroyed twenty-one business establishments on Market Street. Despite the calamitous effect of so disastrous a happening, the reports contain a humorous sidelight or so. A dry goods merchant

<sup>27</sup> T. J. Campbell, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-66; D. E. Donley "The Flood of March, 1867, in the Tennessee River," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, No. 8 (1936), pp. 74-81; *Chattanooga American Union*, March 13, 1868; *City of Chattanooga, Board of Mayor and Aldermen, Minutes*, 1865-1868, pp. 188, 231.

<sup>28</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, January 27, 1895, quoting C. C. Snyder.



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was assisted by volunteers to get his stock out. On checking up, he found a case of old hats where new ones had been. "Every man that helped to move the goods," he complained, "helped himself to a new hat." Barrels of liquor were carried out of a wholesale dealer's establishment. Some were broken open. Cups, dippers, glasses, and old cans came immediately into use, while some imbibers drank directly from the gutters.

Flood and fire were tangible, despite their sometimes fearful consequences, but the diseases which harassed the town, in common with those of the whole Southeast, were more frightening. Neither the cause nor the remedy for most of them was known. Chattanooga boasted of their climate and relied upon their mountain location to prevent the invasion of yellow fever, but they had a secret fear that it might invade their midst. Cholera was also watched with dread, as it made its appearance in other localities. Each year, pleas were made for cleanliness and sanitation. In June, 1873, the fears of the population were confirmed when cases of cholera were acknowledged by local physicians.

Emergency health officers were appointed at once, and orders were issued for the disinfecting of all houses and yards. A tobacconist promptly advertised that smoke from his merchandise made a good disinfectant, and peddlers of all kinds of anticholera mixtures appeared. Homemade remedies of a great variety were used. One man went about town with lumps of asafetida stuffed up his nostrils, while another took "some very sarchin tinctures," which burned his stomach so that he forgot all about the cholera and hurried to the nearest bar-room for "something to put out the fire."

Warnings were issued by the board of health against the improper use of disinfectants and fraudulent preparations. The sale of fruit and vegetables was prohibited, as they were supposed to carry the disease. All the grocers immediately dumped their stocks on the market, with the result that watermelons and cabbages were seen everywhere. The editor of the *Times* noted that the number of people who went fishing or on "bar" hunts was unusually large, and daily printed little pieces, joshing about their luck and reporting on the state of the epidemic in town. The secret behind these exchanges is revealed in a letter written from a "fisherman" at Ringgold, who

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reported that he would continue fishing until the "weather gets too cold for the fish to bite," if the "mortuary reports" from Chattanooga continued large.

The height of the epidemic was reached about July 4, although the typical Independence Day celebration was held as scheduled. Deaths from cholera and other causes in July were 144, forty-one of them in two days. This was approximately 40 per cent of the total for the year. After a brief lull, another flare-up of the disease occurred, but is lasted for only a short time, and the fishermen and "bar hunters" returned home.<sup>29</sup>

More pressing for the majority of the residents than the occasional adversities were the constant lack of capital and general depression conditions, particularly in the early years after the war and for the smaller businessmen. The optimism displayed so earnestly possibly belied the rocky conditions which actually existed. It was, in part, an effort to gloss reality and to attract capital to assist in building a healthy economy. During the late 1860's, columns of sheriff's sales testified to the difficulty of maintaining a solvent business in Chattanooga. So frequent was the mention of hard times that one newspaper noted, after a day of good sales, on April 9, 1868, "At least one day of cheerfulness has passed over the heads of our businessmen."

The city treasurer, plagued with meeting the cost of government at a time when taxes were so frequently delinquent, was authorized to issue scrip in 1869. Payrolls for municipal workers and bills were met with this fiat money, which was sold on the street "for thirty-five cents on the dollar and then used by the purchasers to pay taxes at full value." A cycle was thus created, of which the city was the victim, as services and goods for the city could only be purchased at prices which included the discount.

Despite the condition of the finances, the new administration which took office in September, 1873, met the condition of that panic year with resolution. Dr. Philander D. Sims was the first Southern sympathizer and Democrat to hold the office of mayor after the war. In

<sup>29</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, June 13, 17, 27, 29, July 2, 4, 6, 10, 15, 16, 20, 1873; *Chattanooga City Directory and Business Gazetteer*, 1878-1879, pp. 102-103; Wiltse Manuscript, pp. 651-660.

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the address he made on taking office he said that the unprecedented condition of the financial, commercial, and manufacturing interests had caused a great deal of unemployment. The bond issues, which had been previously authorized, were consequently "to be expended during the present winter for the double purpose of improving streets and at the same time giving employment and means of sustenance to a large and valuable class of our population, [even though] this plan of bridging over the chasm [be] against our convictions of prudence and good financiering for ordinary times."<sup>30</sup>

This evidence of a physician's humanitarian instinct savored too much of the welfare state for the majority of the other members of the government. When the iron plants resumed operation in December, a halt was consequently called to the public works program. The finance committee reported that \$11,786 had been spent in the three months. At the same time, it recommended that the obligations of the city be met by postdated checks. The various forms of scrip continued to be issued until 1875, when Tomlinson Fort, Democrat and ex-Confederate, was elected on a platform in which he promised to discontinue what he called the "scrip-mill." At the time he took office, the city was too poor to buy coal for the meetings of the board, which waited to see that it had a quorum before taking up a collection among its members to send out for fuel. But he fulfilled his promise and stopped the issuing of scrip, although the problem of the city's finances continued to vex successive administrations for a number of years.<sup>31</sup>

Holidays focused attention on the common spirit which prevailed. The most spectacular was the annual celebration of the Fourth of July, when people came from the countryside and neighboring cities by the thousands to participate. Particular attention was given the

<sup>30</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, September 25, 1873.

<sup>31</sup> Armstrong, *op. cit.*, II, 79; *Chattanooga Commerical*, Dec. 7, 17, 1873; *Chattanooga Times*, Nov. 25, 1879, Jan. 27, 1895. A suit was entered for an injunction against the city to prevent the issuing of scrip, which was granted by the court, according to a story in the *Commercial* of October 5, 1875. Col. Fort stated in an account he wrote that his administration stopped the issuing of scrip. As he took office in September, it is probable that he did so.



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plans for the centennial of the nation's birth. People arrived by steamer, wagon, and train all day July 3. Streets, stores, and private homes were colorfully decorated with "flags, engravings and mottos, all brilliantly illuminated [at night] by the three light gas burners attached to the street lamp posts. It was a beautiful sight worthy of the future Pittsburgh."

Before dawn next morning the fire bell awoke everyone and the day's festivities began with an onslaught of "the Horribles, Mulligan Guards, Indians and other clans," who, in all kinds of costumes, "perambulated the city, frightening the children, the wonder of our country cousins, and giving everybody such a hearty laugh that there ought not to be a case of indigestion in the city during the centennial year."

The crowd continued to pour into town until by ten o'clock, it was estimated that 10,000 strangers had arrived. As the bands played, the commandant of the detachment of troops on duty at the National Cemetery, who was marshal of the day, organized the parade for the morning, which the *Times* proudly proclaimed was two and a half miles long. It was reviewed by Mayor Fort and members of the Board of Aldermen, and then disbanded at the speakers' stand. The master of ceremonies introduced veterans of the War of 1812 and the Mexican War. Then he turned to the crowd and said, "Permit me to introduce to you hundreds of soldiers of both armies in the late war, who are now in the audience surrounding me, and are here united in the celebration of the Centennial 4th of July, and have shaken hands across the bloody chasm. . . ." The audience responded spontaneously with "deafening cheers."

In the afternoon, the fair grounds were the scene of a variety of contests. Visiting fire companies contended against those of the community and races were held of all sorts. That night, another procession was held with many colorful floats, and a great fireworks display closed the festivities. In reflecting upon the full implication of the occasion, the editor of the *Times* remarked: "The perfect harmony that has been apparent throughout, the energy with which the ex-Confederates and the ex-Federals took hold of the work assigned them, and worked side by side, was the pleasing feature of the occasion, and one particularly characteristic of Chattanooga.

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Chattanooga knows no North, no South, no East, no West, and but one indivisible country.”<sup>32</sup>

The quiet and reverence with which Decoration Day and Memorial Day were observed offered a contrast to the excitement of the Fourth of July. These were celebrated at the National Cemetery and the Confederate Cemetery, respectively. The latter was established in 1867 as a resting place for those who had died in the war and veterans who wished to lie with their comrades. Groups organized to care for the grounds and to raise the money to erect an appropriate monument. They combined in 1874 as the Confederate Memorial Association and sponsored various social affairs to secure funds. As usual in such matters, the ladies took the lead for large part, but when a picnic excursion was undertaken on one occasion (on the steamer *John T. Wilder*, incidentally) the editor of the *Daily Commercial* remarked that the “citizens without respect to antecedents or sympathies connected with the war, gave the encouragement of their presence.”

The cornerstone of the Confederate monument was laid May 10, 1877. It was a solemn occasion, but one which contained a most encouraging precedent for the future. A “grand procession” of social groups, lodges, invited guests, and “boys in blue” from the local post marched to honor the dead of the Confederacy. The band of the Second United States Infantry furnished appropriate music. An elaborate ceremony was held when the cornerstone was dedicated, and the graves were decorated with evergreens and cut flowers. A “monumental concert” was held that night and the next, with artists from Atlanta and Nashville joining with the local talent.

On the 11th of May, a call was issued for a meeting of the prominent ex-Confederates “to take into consideration their participation in the Federal Decorating ceremonies . . . as a return to those who assisted in the ceremonies on the 10th.” Resolutions were adopted by the assembled veterans and a committee appointed to inquire of

<sup>32</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, July 6, 1876. As a further comment upon the harmony evidenced in this celebration, the *Times*, itself, was at the time owned by S. A. Cunningham, who about fifteen years later established the *Confederate Veteran* in Nashville.

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the Union group if they could participate in the Decoration Day ceremonies. They stated: "That inasmuch as this organization is not intended for display, but only to testify our appreciation of the liberal sentiment manifested by the Federal soldiers on the 10th inst. in the decoration of the graves of the Confederate dead, and our willingness to show to them and the people of the United States that we cherish none of the bad feelings engendered by the late war, it is the sense of this meeting, that our procession will form without uniform, banners, or other evidences of the kind, and proceed on foot to the National Cemetery, and return in the same way."

The suggestion was warmly received by the Federal veterans and a number of the Confederates were placed on the Committee for Arrangements. Invitations were sent the President and other officials of the National Government, generals of both armies, and other important people. May 30 was a beautiful day and a crowd estimated at 5,000 gathered to watch the procession and the ceremony. The cemetery was entered through a gateway which was composed of "a Gothic arch surmounted by a Saxon arch of primitive form," between which evergreens and flowers were interwoven to make the word, "Peace."

"Scores of ladies, assisted by all the gentlemen necessary, [had] worked, from early until late, day after day," to supply evergreens to decorate the 12,000 graves. Inspired by the brotherliness evidenced, the editor of the *Times* prepared a special edition in commemoration. His editorial, entitled "The Harmony," said:

The tenth and the thirtieth of May, 1877, respectively, have their history, and so linked indissolubly, as we have seen, that they become as one history—even as we are *one* people.

Unity of sentiment, and oneness of action, as it were, marked our characters on these days in which the Gray blended with the Blue, and *vice versa*.

Who that witnessed the spectacle at the Confederate Cemetery on the 10th of May; or the ceremonies on the 30th, at the National Cemetery, can doubt our complete unity.

In all public demonstrations there is more or less gush—sentimental tomfoolery—. . . and it might have been expected in the city, even, where the population is so nearly equal, were it not for the fact that we had established lately a disposition to forget and to live in the present.



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This is apparent in our business affairs, where Northern and Southern are together in business; in social affairs, where our Southern girls are united to Northern gentlemen in the happy bonds of wedlock; in our elections where half of one section, and an equal number of the other, are returned to the offices of the municipality—indeed in all our affairs it is manifest.

The hearts of the people of this community had no room for hypocrisy on these two glorious days. There was no time, no need of it,—sincerity was the guiding star of our actions.<sup>83</sup>

These public demonstrations of solidarity were given national prominence the following September. The Presidential election of November, 1876, precipitated a greater political controversy than any since the election of President Lincoln. For months, the result hung in the balance. During this period, conservative Southern Democrats and supporters of the Republican candidate, Rutherford B. Hayes, effected a secret compromise. A part of it called for the appointment of a Southerner to a cabinet position. From the possible appointees, Hayes, after being declared the elected President, selected the ex-Confederate officer and Democrat from Chattanooga, David M. Key.

Key had been active in politics since his return from the war. He represented his district in the state constitutional convention in 1870, and in August of that year was elected judge of the Chancery Court of the Chattanooga area. He served in this capacity until August, 1875, when he resigned to accept the appointment to fill the vacancy in the United States Senate, caused by the death of Andrew Johnson. Key's record in the Senate was marked by a moderate attitude. When told that he was being considered for a cabinet post, he stated his position in a letter to a friend, dated February 16, 1877, which was passed on to Hayes. "I am ready to do all I can to restore confidence and good government to the people of the South," he wrote. "This can only be done by a hearty fraternization of the sections, for which I have labored . . . , and if, as I hope and believe, the Administration will develop a broad and liberal policy toward the people of the

<sup>83</sup> *Chattanooga Daily Commercial*, May 5, 1875; *Chattanooga Times*, May 20, 30, 31, June 12, 1877.

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South, I would not hesitate to incorporate my fortunes and self with it."<sup>34</sup>

On the same day, Andrew J. Kellar, editor of the *Memphis Avalanche* and an important Southern figure in the compromise plan, wrote in a letter: "Were Key in the Cabinet, I could take the aggressive and warmly co-operate with Gov. Hayes & help to lead the conservative national citizens of Tenn. Arkansas & Texas to a higher platform & to a better era of politics."<sup>35</sup> Key's expressed attitude, according to Hayes' own testimony, was responsible for his selection as Postmaster General, but he was helped by the support of such men as Kellar. The position was of tremendous importance because of its control of patronage. It was hoped by a judicious use of patronage to secure further support of Southerners for the conciliatory policy of the Administration.

There was Senate opposition, led by Radical Republicans, to the nomination of Key and others to the cabinet. This, however, was overcome by public opinion. The chief objection that was registered to Key was the fact that he was a Democrat. In the press, some bitter criticism was directed at him by a few of his former Confederate comrades, who felt that he had turned renegade by accepting a post under Republican leadership.<sup>36</sup>

Much of the Southern fear that Hayes's conciliatory policy might be a trap was dispelled as a result of his tour of the South in the fall of 1877. Chattanooga was proud to be on the itinerary. His party included Governor Wade Hampton of South Carolina and members of the Cabinet, which, the *Times* editorially stated, was "locked by a Southern Key." A hearty welcome was prepared for the first visit by a President to the area since Monroe had dropped in to inspect the Brainerd Mission. Speeches were the order of the day.<sup>37</sup> When

<sup>34</sup> A. V. House, Jr., "President Hayes' Selection of David M. Key for Postmaster General," *Journal of Southern History*, IV, 90.

<sup>35</sup> C. V. Woodward, *Reunion and Reaction*, 170.

<sup>36</sup> *The Key Scrapbooks*; C. R. Williams, *The Life of Rutherford Birchard Hayes*, II, 21, 25-29.

<sup>37</sup> The date was September 20, 1877, the fourteenth anniversary of the last day of the Battle of Chickamauga. Interestingly enough, on this visit of reunion, the record shows no mention of the bloodiest encounter of the war.

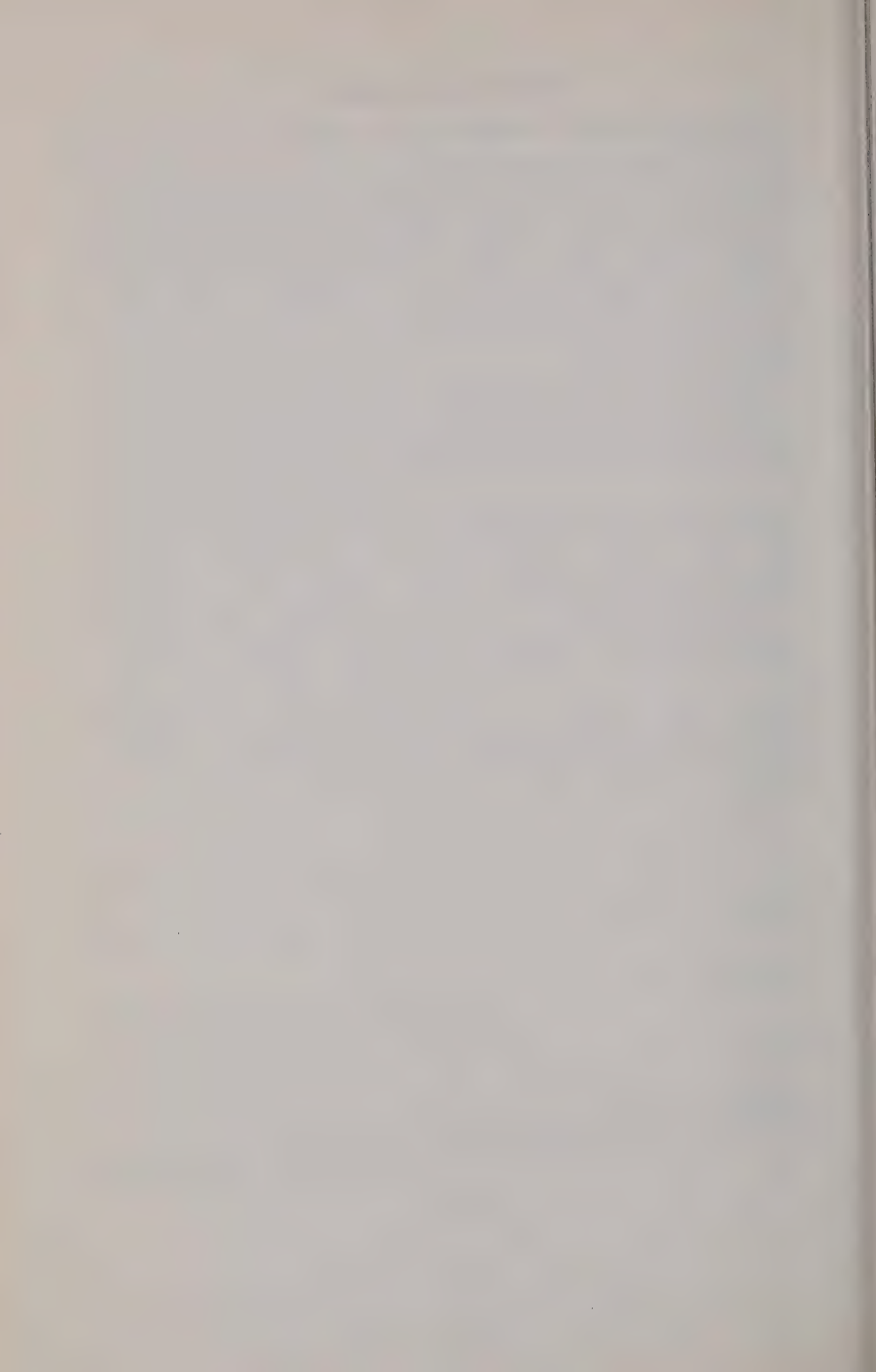
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President Hayes spoke, the band played "Dixie" as an introduction. Then the President assumed the role of master of ceremonies and presented Governor Hampton, Secretary of State Evarts, and Postmaster General Key. The latter, speaking more for a national audience than to his fellow townsmen, restated his conviction that the war had been a mistake, even though as a soldier of the Confederacy, he had served "heartily and honestly . . . to the utmost of his ability." That evening, a grand banquet was held, at which toasts were drunk and other talks given.

President Hayes's message to the community was brief. In opening his remarks he stated that no speech he could make would be more fitting or effective than the editorial which he had read in the *Times* for that morning. To the editorial writer, Hayes personified the nation, to whom he addressed his writing as though speaking for the community: "For a long while our faces were turned away from each other; the light of brotherly love and kindness had faded; a common sorrow, deep and dark, lay like a fragment of night between us. It is part of our mission, and the best part, to join hands with you, and take all these sad and hurtful things up by the roots and destroy forever the last vestige of reproductive power that they have. We ask you to give us your hands in this matter in all sincerity, that the early days of a united brotherhood may break once more and all hearts rejoice that the night has passed forever."<sup>38</sup>

<sup>38</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, Sept. 20, 21, 22, 1877.





## CHAPTER XV

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### *A New Spokesman*

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MANY things combined to win for Chattanooga attention from the rest of the country. One was the stream of visitors to see the scenes of the great battles. "By way of Chattanooga" became a well-known expression to tourists. The developing iron industry drew the attention of the business world. Regardless of their reason for coming, all visitors found the surrounding scenes of natural beauty an inspiration.

Visiting journalists reported upon this variety of interests, although there was an occasional discordant note in the general chorus of praise. One reporter wrote that Chattanooga was "an overgrown country village [with] teams of various kinds upon her straggling streets, from the 'geared up' bull calf of two years old and a pair of jennets, but little larger than the jack rabbit of the West, even up to the very stylish, good and well matched horses, [which] help to bear out the impression that this city is no more than a swollen village. . . ." It was his opinion that the town had been "overdone in the way of advertising."

The community also had its defenders, for an editor in the nearby rival, Knoxville, wrote about the same time: "Chattanooga has more backbone for its size and advantages than any small village we know of. She has as many lives as a cat. As to killing her, even the floods have failed. You may knock the breath out of her—that's all. She will re-fill her lungs and draw a longer breath than ever. Her pluck has saved her and is likely to make her one of the most flourishing and prosperous cities in the South." And another editor added his belief

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in Chattanooga in more flowery language: "The Funnel of the New South is worthy of the appellation of the Golden Gate, for the diadem with which we would thus crown her is no brighter than her future promise or present importance."<sup>1</sup>

The local newspapers did their best to add to the attention the town was increasingly attracting. Their columns contained frequent invitations to outsiders to join in the creation of what was surely to be the "greatest inland city of the South." All their enthusiasm, however, could not overcome the great local journalistic weakness. Lack of financial strength produced a long parade of weeklies and dailies, which were reorganized, merged, or discontinued, as their fates dictated. What the town needed at this phase of its history was a strong journalist, one who saw and appreciated the vision of the town's buoyant citizens, but who also realized that civic and cultural improvement was necessary before their full hopes could be achieved.

As though Providence saw the need and answered it, a young man from Knoxville was drawn to Chattanooga to participate in a newspaper enterprise inspired by Franc M. Paul, who had been the publisher of the wartime *Chattanooga Rebel*. Adolph S. Ochs, whose future was to be indissolubly linked with that of Chattanooga, was nineteen when he arrived April 1, 1877. He was the son of Germans, who had emigrated to America in 1848,<sup>2</sup> and had gone to work in the office of Captain Rule, editor of the *Knoxville Chronicle* when he was eleven years old.

The newspaper, the *Daily Dispatch*, which Paul with Ochs as an assistant started, failed after eight months of operation. Wishing to

<sup>1</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, November 30, 1880, quoting correspondence to the *Louisville Courier-Journal*; December 15, 1880, reprinting an editorial from the *Knoxville Dispatch*; November 27, 1880, reprinting an editorial from the *Athens Post*.

<sup>2</sup> Interestingly enough, Ochs's inheritance fitted well with Chattanooga's harmonious attitude between ex-Rebel and ex-Federal. His mother was an ardent Southern sympathizer, at one time barely escaping arrest for attempting to smuggle medical supplies across the Ohio River from Cincinnati, where she lived during the war. His father, however, was no less ardent in his support of the Union cause and served as an officer in the army. A. S. Ochs stood, as another with a similar inheritance once expressed it, in a doorway between two rooms, viewing a mutual tragedy.



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remain in Chattanooga, Ochs joined with another young printer and prepared a city directory for the town. This experience was valuable to the newcomer. It helped to acquaint him with the people and in addition caused them to give him more than mere passing notice. He learned something about the community's history as well as its present, both of which gave a foundation for an inventory of its future possibilities. When the figures were totaled by the young directory workers, 11,448 residents were estimated for the city, of whom 7,451 were white and 3,947 colored. The value of real and personal property was \$3,873,445. As evidence of the cosmopolitan make-up of the population, only 773 inhabitants were natives of Tennessee. The adult male population contained representatives of all but five of the then existent states and of nineteen foreign areas.<sup>3</sup>

These people gave more thought to "corner lots, hematites, useful timbers, etc.," according to one commentator, "than to fashionable follies, it might even be said than to social amenities." However, picnics, excursions, and boat rides were held in season. Socials and church fairs were enjoyed, at which such typical contests as choosing the "most popular railroad man, most popular rolling mill man, most industrious young lady, and most popular lady" were features. Musicales were given, and amateur theatrical groups vied with each other to present dramatic skits and plays. The Stanton House Ballroom frequently rang with merriment, as young and old gathered for the familiar "German" of the period. Fraternal organizations, among them the Turn Verein, the B'nai B'rith, and the Working Men's Union, were, of course, present and sponsored many of the planned social activities. Most of the social life, however, was informal and spontaneous. "We intermingle," one contemporary recorded, "we enjoy each other's society, we indulge to a moderate degree in the pleasures of fashion; but as a rule our social affairs are conducted in the go-as-you-please, or do-as-you-please plan. The

<sup>3</sup> *Chattanooga City Directory and Business Gazeteer*, 1878-1879, pp. 96-97. The states not represented were: California, Colorado, Nebraska, Nevada, and Vermont. The foreign areas from which residents had come were: Austria, Canada, Cuba, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Holland, Hungary, Isle of Man, Italy, Mexico, Norway, Russia, Scotland, Sweden, Switzerland, and Wales. Incidentally, three residents had been born at sea.

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latchstrings of our doors are always out to each other. Our hearts and homes are open to the deserving stranger who would be a friend. Sectionalism has as little place in society as in business. Ostracism is not known. He or she who should assume the role of ostraciser would straightway become, by common consent, a conspicuous ostra-cisee."<sup>4</sup>

New Year's Day afforded the opportunity for the neighborly community to display its dignity and finery. The traditional custom of calling was generally observed in Chattanooga on this day, and both public receptions and private parties were held. Lists of those receiving were published in the newspapers, and groups of gentlemen paid their respects between the hours of two to nine P.M. to the ladies who were hostesses. The local custom called for elaborate plans. The *Times* reported in 1882:

When the reception is to be *en grande tonne*, the rooms are darkened with closed blinds and drawn curtains, the gas is lit and the hostess and her friends receive in full evening dress. Flowers decorate every available point, white candles burn in gilt sconces and artistic candlesticks. . . .

As for the refreshments great latitude is allowed. Thus, in one house the table may groan under a sumptuous collation, while in another cold turkey and tongue, biscuits, sandwiches, a bowl of chicken salad or pickled oysters, together with fruit, coffee, and the customary cake and wine, will comprise the bill of fare. In many houses, wine is omitted altogether, and good taste demands that coffee shall be furnished everywhere for gentlemen who do not take wine. It is a decided breach of etiquette to insist on a glass of wine.

At the more informal receptions, where daylight is admitted, the ladies wear merely handsome afternoon toilets with lace fichus and flowers on the corsage and in the hair. . . . Feather fans are chosen by the elderly ladies, while painted silk are preferred by the younger ones.

Since so many ladies receive in full dress, many gentlemen, especially those who pay their calls in carriages, wear full dress, also. On the other

<sup>4</sup> J. E. MacGowan, ed., *Chattanooga, Its Past, Present and Future*, p. 13. One association which grew up and lasted for the life of its participants was a fishing club, composed of ex-Federal and ex-Confederate soldiers. Each year, they fished and reminisced. Though the membership changed somewhat during the years, they continued to make their expeditions until in 1925, none of the original group was left to enjoy the pleasures of their beloved sport.

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hand, the majority, who do not profess to be strictly social men, can wear a neat business suit with propriety.

The fashion of hanging a basket at the doorbell to receive cards is a favorite one among the ladies, who for one reason or another find it inconvenient to open their houses to callers on New Year's Day, and who yet wish to know who would have called had they done so. Some of the New Year cards which will be used in this city tomorrow are very beautiful and can be kept as ornaments or souvenirs.<sup>5</sup>

Lectures, occasional concerts, and performances by touring theatrical companies offered additional opportunities for entertainment, but principal attention was given to business activity by the newspapers. Although new journals came and went, the chief contenders for patronage in Chattanooga in the summer of 1878 were the *Commercial*, a weekly, and the *Times*, a daily.<sup>6</sup> The latter was the older, and its vicissitudes make an exceptionally clear record of the risks and difficulties involved in the local newspaper business in the period. On December 15, 1869, the first issue of the *Times* appeared, published by Kirby, Gamble and Company. Major Thomas B. Kirby, ex-Federal officer and graduate of Yale, was editor, and Patton L. Gamble, a practical printer, superintended the mechanical operations. The paper's appearance was not too prepossessing, as the type was poor and an old hand press did not improve its impression.<sup>7</sup> The firm managed to keep going though constantly beset with financial problems until early in 1872, when it became involved in legal complications and lost its type, press, and job office. A friendly printer

<sup>5</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, January 1, 1882. The reporter, carried away by this enthusiasm, forgot apparently that his story would be published on New Year's Day and used "tomorrow" as of the time of writing. He could well have given more space to the cards, for the gentleman caller occasionally tried to be as elaborate in the preparation of the memento he left of his visit as his hostess did to make his visit memorable.

<sup>6</sup> The *Commercial* started as a daily in 1872, switched to a weekly in 1877, back to a daily in 1884 and discontinued publication in 1887. In 1878, two other newspapers operated; the *Tennessee Republican* and the *Greenback Advocate*. Neither lasted long and no copies have been found.

<sup>7</sup> The equipment was second- and thirdhand, as it had been used on the *Daily Republican*, which, in turn, had secured it from the *American Union*. These were but two of the several papers which were born and died in the period between 1865 and 1869.



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came to the rescue and offered the facilities of his shop, so the *Times* continued to be printed regularly, although in a reduced size.

New life was stimulated in April of that year, when equipment was obtained for both the news and job departments. However, the affairs of the *Times* continued to be financially involved. Major Kirby secured Gamble's interest in 1874, but the situation was not bettered, and the paper barely kept alive until in March, 1875, it was sold at a Chancery Court sale to Patten and Payne, booksellers and stationers.<sup>8</sup> The paper was operated under the management of Patten until September 30, 1876, when it was sold to S. A. Cunningham of Nashville and W. I. Crandall, who had been one of the publishers of the *Advertiser* before the war. Within a short time, this partnership was dissolved and Cunningham assumed sole control of the paper. A young man without much working capital, he followed a customary practice of seeking partners, who, before too long, bowed out as gracefully as possible.

Although Cunningham owned the *Times*, it was still under lien to Patten, who had taken the paper as a part of his share of the proceeds, when the partnership of Patten and Payne was dissolved. This debt added to the burdens so typical for newspapers of the time and place. The circumstances of the *Times* has been described as "dragging . . . from pillar to post, having to lean heavily against one or the other, whenever it desired to cast a shadow or to take a long breath." By the summer of 1878, Cunningham was willing to leave such worries to others.

Young Ochs, after publication of the directory, planned to re-enter the newspaper business. When the troubled publisher of the *Times* heard this, he offered the paper to Ochs for \$800, if he would also assume the outstanding debt. This was just the opportunity Ochs sought, but he did not have the \$800 and failed in his efforts to borrow it. After further negotiations and the discovery that the First National Bank was willing to lend him \$300, Ochs signed a contract

<sup>8</sup> The partners were Thomas H. Payne and Zeboim C. Patten, both of whom had come to Chattanooga with the Federal Army and resolved to cast their fortunes with the town after release from army service in 1865. The business, now known as T. H. Payne Company, is the oldest in present-day Chattanooga.

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with Cunningham for the purchase of the paper on June 29, 1878. The terms of the agreement provided that he should pay \$250 for a half interest, with the further opportunity to buy Cunningham's share at the end of two years for a price to be determined then.

In the meantime, full control of the business was vested in the new half owner. Though he wore a heavy black mustache to conceal his youth, Ochs was only twenty years of age. His father, consequently, had to come from Knoxville to sign the papers for him. However, the *Times* was all his, to do with as he saw fit, and he immediately set to work with confidence and energy to reorganize it. He found it "utterly delapidated, demoralized, and publicly and privately anathematized." The plant was in poor shape, and circulation figures of the daily had dropped to a low of about 250 while the weekly had practically lapsed. Pressroom, composing room, and business office were all crowded into a space twenty by forty feet.

The employee roster numbered five on the business and editorial staff, six printers, two "subs," and two Negroes, who furnished the motive power for the press. An outstanding bill to the Associated Press, which put the paper in "very bad odor" with that agency, took twenty-five dollars of the money which remained from the loan, so the new publisher had to scurry around to secure more money to meet his first payroll. There were, however, two important assets which would not be enumerated in any financial statement. One was the services of Colonel John E. MacGowan as editor. Colonel MacGowan was a man of ability and judgment, who exerted quietly a steadying influence on his young friend and admirer, who was also his employer. After his war service in the Federal Army, MacGowan made Chattanooga his permanent residence, dividing his time between the practice of law and editorial work on newspapers. The other asset was Ochs, himself. He had knowledge of every phase of journalism except the perilous one of ownership. More important, however, were his courage, energy, and determination, but most important of all was his vision of responsible journalism.

The issue of the *Times* for July 2, 1878, appeared as usual from its office at Eighth and Cherry streets. Its four pages were well laden with advertisements, notices of court actions, and local news. A

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hop at Natural Bridge, a ball game between the Roane Iron Company's team and the Little Jokers, and the social item that Mrs. Key, wife of the postmaster general, had returned from Washington to spend the summer at her home in Chattanooga, attracted local interest. "Croakers" were reminded that their favorite theme, the business depression, was still with them, but the paper asked, "Should times be called distressingly hard when the people of a city the size and containing the wealth of Chattanooga raise \$1,500 for a 4th of July frolic?"

Local editorial comment, which appeared on the second page, carried surprising news for the paper's readers. The *Times* had changed ownership. This was not so surprising in itself; the startling thing was that young Ochs controlled the newspaper. Neither was it surprising that Ochs should announce a policy on which his paper would rise or fall. That was usually done when a paper was started or changed ownership. But this announcement had greater interest for the discerning reader for two reasons: it was seriously meant, and it stated the policy and the ethics upon which one of the most distinguished careers in American journalism was built. Printed in five general sections, it read:

(1) It will be the foremost purpose of [the *Times*'] manager to make it the indispensable organ of the business, commercial and productive, of Chattanooga, and of the mineral and agricultural districts of Tennessee, North Georgia, and Alabama.

(2) The paper will contain the latest news by telegraph markets from all the leading centers of trade, and the freshest news by mail. The local news department shall be as near perfect as hard work and vigilance can make it. In the items of general commercial and local information it is proposed to leave nothing to be desired, and no room for home or foreign competition.

(3) Politically the paper will move in line with the Conservative Democracy of the South. In State affairs we shall take such course as will, in our judgment, best serve the interests and protect and advance the credit and honor of Tennessee.

(4) In our efforts to reduce this brief program to practice in these columns, we shall expect the aid and sympathy of the manufacturing, commercial, professional and working classes of our people. Being cognizant of the need of and the strongly expressed desire for such a newspaper in



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Chattanooga as the above outline indicates the *Times* to be, we have taken the people at their word, and shall give them a chance to support that which they have been asking for—a paper primarily devoted to the material, educational, and moral growth of our progressive city and its surrounding territory.

(5) In this matter of patronage we shall make no “appeals,” but rely upon that sense of propriety and justice which must teach every intelligent citizen that the obligation between himself and the paper is a natural one, ours to print and circulate such a journal as we have described, his to see that he contributes his share, in proportion to the benefits such a paper confers on him as a citizen, the means to sustain it and promote its growth in material means and general journalistic value. In short, we shall conduct our paper on business principles, neither seeking nor giving “sops” and “donations” except to or for legitimate objects of charity.

The financial worries under which the young publisher began his career were shortly increased when a typically frank expression in the paper brought about a suit for libel. He covered any confusion he might have felt, however, by printing that he was “rather elated,” and the story carried the headline, “FAME.” The suit was decided by the court in favor of the plaintiff, but only thirty-five cents in damages were awarded. Later in the summer, a new danger threatened not only the *Times* but the community as a whole. A familiar enemy had struck earlier in the lower South, when a serious epidemic of yellow fever began in New Orleans. During the months of June, July, and August, the yellow jack moved up the Mississippi Valley. Chattanooga was confident that the disease would not reach their mountain stronghold, but displayed their interest in alleviating the stricken areas by raising money through charity balls, concerts, and socials. Some of the local doctors volunteered for duty, as did both men and women as nurses, and were dispatched to the suffering communities.

Some suspicious illness was noted in Chattanooga in August, but it was not diagnosed as yellow fever. Attending physicians called it “pernicious bilious fever.” Even though the general belief was that the mountain climate of East Tennessee would not tolerate yellow fever, local health authorities advised residents to place their premises in a sanitary condition, while the city government went to work to accomplish the same purpose generally. Refugees came to Chatta-

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nooga from the affected areas, and expressed confidence that they were safe from the disease. Nevertheless, everyone grew restless, particularly when some deaths occurred among the refugees. It was not, however, until a socially prominent individual died in mid-September that general panic descended upon the community. People fled in all sorts of conveyances, as though an invading military force were again reaching the city. Some took refuge on the mountains, where butchers and grocers set up temporary stands. Others gathered in a refugee camp, set up at Blowing Springs, Georgia, by the Board of Health. Relatives and friends of a steamboat captain were embarked by him and taken to an anchorage some miles up the river. Several railroad men fitted up an old passenger coach with beds. Each evening the car was attached to a train and taken out of town, to be brought back similarly the next morning.

Only some 1,800 people are reported to have remained in town. However, those who refueged were not considered shirkers. "The fewer people here," the *Times* advised, "the quicker we can whip Bronze John." Those who stayed kept a minimum of life going in the community. Policemen and undertakers, ministers, white and colored, Protestant and Roman Catholic, labored together to help the unfortunate and to bury the dead. Nurses and doctors exposed themselves to the disease. Druggists were made official dispensers of medicine, for, just as in the instance of the cholera attack, some peddlers of fake remedies turned up. A relief committee was organized to supervise aid and to care for countless details. Some of its members transported nurses and doctors, others cared for the money and property of the ill and deceased, and still others watched warily to intercept such swindlers as might turn up to profit from the catastrophe. Some, among them Mayor Thomas J. Carlyle, Father Patrick Ryan, Hattie Ackerman, a schoolteacher, and Henry Savage, a gambler, died, casualties to their heroic service.

Assistance was received from near and far. New York and Paris, France, contributed money. Other communities sent a variety of supplies, including several wagons of garden produce from nearby villages. Doctors and nurses arrived from Memphis, Atlanta, and other places, as did medical supplies.

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Those who remained in town were almost isolated, and experienced difficulty securing food and other necessities. Industrial and business activity was virtually suspended. The newspapers continued publication, to bring news of the outside world, but in a reduced size. The editors realized the seriousness of the situation, but the writer for the *Times* frequently broke into broad, frontier humor. "The hospital is awful handy to the graveyard," he said in the midst of the epidemic, and again, "The road principally traveled in these times is the road to the boneyard." And as another quip at man's mortality, he wrote, "11 deaths yesterday and more coming. Trot out your next funeral."

Possibly such rough fun at the town's predicament was intended to aid in filling the paper. Since business was at a standstill, few advertisements were inserted, and only scattered steamboats and a reduced number of trains brought word from the outside. The mail clerk of the steamboat, *Bishop*, said that in carrying the pouches between the boat and the post office he saw so few people on Market Street that it looked like a "thoroughfare of Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*, so deadly still everything seemed." His footfalls on the wooden sidewalk made a noise comparable to that of a shod horse on a board platform, a fact which added to his already uncomfortable feeling.

Neighboring towns quarantined against Chattanooga. Many would not allow trains which stopped there to stop at their stations. One steamboat crew, which had just come from the stricken town, tied up at a landing some miles up the river and went toward a nearby store to secure some supplies. They were met by an armed man who ordered them to return to the boat immediately. Rural subscribers to the Chattanooga newspapers attempted crudely to disinfect them first. They were read at extreme arm's length, then hastily burned. The extent to which the countryside feared Chattanooga is well illustrated by a scene at a fall convention to nominate political candidates. The rural delegates refused to go to Chattanooga, so the meeting was held some miles out in the country. Even then, the city group was separated from the others by several hundred feet and the votes were called back and forth across the safety zone.



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Occasional false prophecies of frost raised the hopes of the afflicted community, but all through October the fever continued to take its toll. Gradually then Chattanooga began to take on an appearance of life. On November 1, regular train service was restored on the Western and Atlantic Railroad. The next morning the *Times* commented, "It was refreshing to a fellow who has seen nothing much but undertakers' proceedings for a month or so to observe the renewal of 'busy life.'" And on the following day, the *Weekly Commercial* shouted in its largest headline, "Come Home! Welcome News From The Board of Health." Five days later the first frost of the year occurred and the danger was past.

The mysterious enemy had taken 366 lives, and cost the town, according to the report of Mayor Hill the next year, not less than half a million dollars. However, those who survived were neither defeated nor dejected. By mid-November, business conditions were reported to be lively, and one merchant was advertising that his recent buying trip to New York had been most successful. Jobbers there had large stocks, which they would sell at a sacrifice, as the yellow fever had interrupted their Southern trade. The Grimaldi Pantomime Troupe, "par excellence," as it was announced, made a timely visit with their production of "Humpty Dumpty," as though to assist the townspeople to relax the tension of the previous months. And a new thousand-pound bell, costing \$775, was ordered for the courthouse, although the time for celebrating the victory over "Bronze John" had passed.<sup>9</sup>

If the effect upon the community was critical, it was almost devastating to young Ochs. But he responded with the same spirit the town showed. In an editorial, titled "Our Plague," the *Times* said that those of faint heart asked, "Won't this ruin Chattanooga?" The paper's reply was; "No. If this city was born to be 'ruined,' it would have been blotted out years ago." Immediately, it started anew its old boosting tactics. Done with the obvious intention of spurring local

<sup>9</sup> For this account of yellow fever in Chattanooga, the newspapers from July 20 through November 15, 1878, are the best source, but all the books about the community, written since that time, have interesting sections about the epidemic, as does the Wiltse Manuscript, which includes personal experiences.

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citizens to correct circumstances which might handicap the community, it also served to call the attention of all who might read to the fact that Chattanooga was the living embodiment of the New South.

Periodically, the *Times* did a little puffing for itself, maintaining without apology that "' He that bloweth not his own horn will not have it blown.' We have a good horn and we intend to blow it." Although he would frequently contribute a story about activities in other communities, when he would visit them, Ochs wrote very little otherwise. His energies were devoted to the business office. However, he did not neglect the mechanical part of the paper, which he had learned as a printer's devil and as a compositor. He also had a discriminating editorial sense. Always hard working and alert, he would wander through the composing room just before the issue was "put to bed," and examine the proofs or read a story in type. He would suggest sometimes that one be changed or another left out until more was known about it; that a headline or a phrase be re-written, or that an article be omitted because it was not good ethics to print it. His judgment of news was so good that his associates remarked about it frequently in later years.

On March 12, 1879, he celebrated a great occasion. To the patrons and friends of the *Times*, he revealed an interesting side of his character in an editorial which appeared on the 13th:

### A SPECIMEN OF A NEWSPAPER MAN'S CHEEK

#### BLOWING HIS OWN HORN

We do not regard it as necessary to make any apologies for the remarks that follow. We are but human, and have our full share of self-admiration. This is a happy day with the publisher of this paper, and it is almost impossible to keep our happiness out of these columns. Though born in Cincinnati, Ohio, we have not until today become a citizen. Our happiness comes from the fact that today we are 21 years of age and have become a citizen—a man. Long have we looked to the time when we would have attained our majority, and many have been the bright pictures we have fancied ourselves the center of at the time. How many of these hopes have been realized, we need not say.

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He followed by thanking Chattanoogaans for their patronage, which had brought about a considerable growth in the circulation and advertising revenue of the paper.

Chattanooga's response to this revelation was doubtless typical of the frontier, where age or political affiliation or previous residence meant so little. "I must say," a correspondent of the paper said, in a letter published a day or so later, "if the *Times* has been published by a 'boy' since you became the purchaser until now, then I wish there were more 'boys.'"

A strangely interesting relationship existed between the young publisher and his editor, more than a quarter of a century his elder. Ochs was younger than any of MacGowan's children, who were amused by the apparent easy confidence which he exhibited in conference with the older man. They soon realized, however, that their father obviously looked upon the younger man as an intelligent equal. To the team, the *Times* was a "public institution and a private enterprise combined." They believed that what helped Chattanooga helped them, and on a wider plane, assisting Tennessee and the South, as a whole, was equally beneficial. It "increases our means of national enjoyment," the editor wrote, "and strengthens our consciousness that we are doing our share of the world's work."<sup>10</sup>

Neither of the two was a son of the South. They were not advocates of an agrarian society but of a diversified economy. They accepted the growing materialism of the times, but thought of it as a means to the good life, as did the majority of their contemporaries. They believed that men could benefit from the wheels of factories, although their view was not the narrow one of accumulating profit for its own sake. Men should not be slaves to wealth, but wealth, instead, provided the opportunity for widening cultural, social, and spiritual horizons. They believed in themselves and in their ability to control the machine for their use as the wilderness had once been conquered. Their chief failure, and it was true of their whole generation, was their inability to realize that the machine was steadily creating new

<sup>10</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, February 12, 1881, July 28, 1883. (Alice MacGowan, a daughter of Colonel MacGowan, to G. E. Govan, August 24, 1940.)



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problems, problems with which their society, neither by experience nor by training, was equipped to deal.

There came a veritable barrage of challenges from the columns of the *Times* on the need for all types of improvements, city and state. The presence of open sewers and mudholes in the poorly drained streets were deplored. In addition to better sanitation, the need for a municipal hospital was emphasized. The townspeople were chided about "ill contrived buildings" and the practice of allowing hogs and cattle to roam the streets. When the editor saw women working in a public gang, he deplored the sight and remarked that there was no justification for "making a woman conspicuously disreputable." If female prisoners had to work out their fines, it should be done where they were not exposed to public view. He also objected to the custom of public hangings, which had the effect, he insisted, of brutalizing both justice and the onlookers, as well.

He spoke his mind about public financing. The accumulated debt of the city, which had been acquired in many ways by the various administrations since the war, should be refinanced, so the municipal economic condition would be stable enough to go ahead with needed improvements. The state debt, which was a political football for more than a decade, should be refunded at full value, in accordance with the Ochs-MacGowan idea of sound finance. The editorial columns of the paper emphasized constantly that public debt should never be repudiated, however incurred, and that a good credit reputation was vital for the future development of the town and its state.

At the same time, the *Times* never ceased its pronouncements that Chattanooga was destined to be the "Pittsburgh of the South." In thus "blowing a Chattanooga horn and flying only a Chattanooga flag," the *Times* aroused the antagonism at times of residents of other communities. "It is astonishing," one man wrote the editor of his home-town paper, "how these Chattanooga fellows wade around in filth and blow and bellow. Probably it is because they have a good *Ochs* to lead them. . . . Everything about Chattanooga is transient except her mud, bad drainage and miserable lanes. Everything has a temporary appearance, as though it had been erected with the expectation of the next flood carrying it away. However, her citizens

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are full of wind and keep blowing, and every time a new peanut stand is opened, they hoop it up and noise it throughout the land as another step to future development. . . ."<sup>11</sup>

Despite all the boasting, claim, and counterclaim, from many other evidences Chattanooga was a typical small town, with its conservative and superstitious elements. Every innovation was likely to be slowly accepted. When, for example, a plant to manufacture ice was opened, there was some difficulty, according to the newspaper, to secure laborers. As one Negro said, when queried about it, the owners were trying to do something God, Himself, was unable to accomplish—make ice in the summertime. And when the first telephones were installed, old timers were somewhat dubious. They had to accept the evidence of their ears that sound traveled over the wires, but one pointed out that the stations then installed were all on level ground. He would not depend on one if he lived on Lookout Mountain; he was willing to bet that the sound "wouldn't run uphill."

When the first electric lights were installed in 1882, the generating plant could provide current for only thirty-nine lights, all of which were quickly contracted for. The subscribers, however, did not all use the new acquisition to light business quarters. Some tried to outdo others by erecting a tall pole on the top of buildings and placing lights there. The *Times* bragged before the installations were completed that it would have the "highest light on Market Street," and it would "illuminate the entire block and surrounding section." When a social was held at Tschopik's Garden, the fashionable outdoor ice-cream-and-cake parlor, shortly after the light was installed, it was removed from its high position and carried to the Garden where it made a striking contrast with the gentle gleam of the Japanese lanterns.

The electric light was but a novel plaything at that time. Its current was generated by a small steam plant, and no one ever remotely considered that its eventual development would be the most important factor in the improvement of the Tennessee River. Interest

<sup>11</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, Feb. 16, 1882. Quoting letter written to the editor of the *Morristown Gazette*.

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was then concentrated, as it had been from the earliest days, upon the river's use in transportation. Work was continuing on the canal around Muscle Shoals, although progress was handicapped by niggardly appropriations by Congress. Other sections also needed attention, however, and conventions of interested people continued to be held, at which insistent demands were made for larger grants by the Federal Government.<sup>12</sup>

Chattanooga's citizens—among them Adolph Ochs—were extremely active, as usual, in these conventions, and the *Times* vigorously presented the case for improvement in its columns. Greatest excitement, however, in the old fields of river and railroad development was created by the completion of the Cincinnati and Southern Railroad. Bill Arp, the humorist, noted the interest on a lecture visit. "I came around by Chattanooga," he wrote. "I saw my friend 'Lo' the poor Indian, and says he, Major, the Cincinnati Southern is——just then Mr. James came in, and after I was introduced says he, Mr. Arp, the Cincinnati Southern is undoubtedly the greatest——. He was suddenly called to the door by a gentleman in a phaton, and I heard him say, The Cincinnati Southern has telegraphed, but I couldn't hear any more; for a friend called on me to go over to the photograph rooms and see a photo of the new bridge over the river, which the Cincinnati Southern had just completed. I heard a rattling drayman holler something to another drayman, and the answer was 'Cincinnati Southern.' I was staying at the Stanton House, and the landlord got so excited talking about the C. S. that he forgot to order the 'bus' and I like to have missed the train."<sup>13</sup>

The number of items about the railroad and its possible influence upon the future of the town, which were carried by the newspapers, was evidence that Arp's humorous comments were but slightly exaggerated. When the last rail was to be placed, the *Times* reported it and advised the citizens, "Go ring your bell and fire your gun, shout glory, for the 'Boom' has come." And when the first train arrived, great enthusiasm was shown. The principal display of interest was

<sup>12</sup> Although only two in a lengthy series; one convention met at Huntsville in 1880, and another, with 500 delegates present, in Chattanooga in 1884.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, June 6, 1879.



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reserved, however, for the celebrations which were held in each of the two cities early in 1880. The first was in Cincinnati and was attended by so many Chattanoogaans and other Southerners that three special trains, each of which was "adequately equipped with 15 kegs of beer and numberless square wicker baskets and provisions," were required to carry them. At the banquet in honor of the occasion, 1800 diners were present. When the band played "Dixie," all attending "went wild with enthusiasm and there was a sea of waving napkins. Then the band played the 'Star-Spangled Banner,' and the enthusiasm was still greater."

On the occasion of the return of the courtesies, 312 visitors were on the trains which were greeted at the Chattanooga station with a bonfire. All available vehicles were drafted to take the party on a sight-seeing tour of Lookout Mountain. Trips were made to the industrial plants, and the tourists exclaimed "over their extent and variety." No formal program was held, although a dinner and "lawn dance" were given at the Stanton House.

Although the railroad was owned by the city of Cincinnati, it was operated under lease by the Erlanger syndicate. As the same interests operated the Alabama Great Southern, Chattanooga became the center of a system which extended from the Queen City on the Ohio to the Crescent City on the Gulf.<sup>14</sup>

Other railroads were projected in this period and each received the attention of the *Times*, which never neglected its important function as the promoter of all its community's interests, but, the editor reflected, Chattanooga needed "a college of the first class worse than she needs more railroads." In fact, education, elementary,

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*, March 16, 19, 1880; McGuffey, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

Early in the 1870's, when it appeared certain that the Cincinnati Southern would be built and that Chattanooga would be its Southern terminus, friends of the project attempted to secure an appropriation of \$100,000 from the city as a token of its interest. For one reason and another, this assistance was not voted until the trains were actually running on the road. The money was then entrusted to a representative of Cincinnati, who was accompanied by a Chattanoogaan as bodyguard. These two armed themselves and entrained for Cincinnati. They sat up all night, exercising particular vigilance as the train dived in and out of the number of tunnels, which mark the route. The money was safely delivered to the proper authorities in Cincinnati.

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secondary, and higher, was a constant source of editorial comment in the paper. Appeals for schools on all levels and for both races, not only in Chattanooga but in the whole South, were frequent. No more effective way could be found to build a better region and community.

An attempt had been made to organize public schools in Chattanooga under the state system created by the Brownlow administration in 1867. However, the state's effort was inadequately supported and was abolished in July, 1870, leaving responsibility upon local county and district authorities. Even before the legislature acted to relieve the state of educational obligation, the chaotic conditions under which the public schools attempted to operate brought into existence in Chattanooga a number of small private schools for white children, while charitable church societies joined with the Federal Government to sponsor the Howard School for Negroes.<sup>15</sup>

Some of the sons and daughters of Chattanooga attended the Lookout Mountain Educational Institute, which occupied the old Federal army hospital buildings on the mountain. Christopher R. Robert, of New York City, financed the school. He had been somewhat disturbed by the way that Northern philanthropy had been directed largely to the assistance of the Negroes, and determined to supplement the efforts Southerners were making to revive and to strengthen their educational facilities by his support of a co-educational institution for white children. The Institute opened in 1866 and had an average attendance of eighty students in each of its two terms until it was discontinued in 1872. At that time, Robert was in poor health, but the chief reason for his giving up the project was his desire to use all his resources to strengthen Robert College in Constantinople.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> C. W. Dabney, *Universal Education in the South*, I, 295-301; A. D. Holt, *The Struggle for a State System of Public Schools in Tennessee*, 1903-1906, pp. 5-30; A. A. Taylor, *The Negro in Tennessee*, 1865-1880, pp. 170-172; *City of Chattanooga, Board of Mayor and Aldermen, Minutes*, 1865-1868, pp. 230, 247, 358.

<sup>16</sup> Armstrong, *op. cit.*, II, 162; McGuffey, *op. cit.*, pp. 412, 413; R. S. Walker, *Lookout, the Story of a Mountain*, pp. 152-168. Though Robert's intention was to establish a philanthropic institution, many of the students were from the more prominent Chattanooga families. When he discontinued his support of the Institute, he retained the ownership of the property, which by his will was given to Robert College, Constantinople, and was sold for its benefit.

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The closing of the Lookout Mountain Institute came in the same year as the enactment of a city ordinance to create a system of public schools. The state legislature passed a law in 1872 under which municipalities were authorized to set up public school systems, for which they could levy taxes and over which they had full power. Public school commissioners were appointed by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, and the responsibility for organizing and operating the system placed in their hands. The schools followed the typical Southern practice of separate buildings for whites and Negroes, and by January, 1873, were in full operation.<sup>17</sup>

A panic year, as 1873, was a very poor time for the starting of such a venture, and occasionally the personal credit of the commissioners had to be used to keep the system alive. Some assistance was received from the Peabody Fund, which had been established a short time earlier to help education in the South, and after the first difficult year, money came from the state, as the legislature re-enacted virtually the Brownlow legislation for the support of public schools. Nevertheless, years were required to establish an effective system. "Prejudice, indifference and politics were the chief restraining influences," according to one authority,<sup>18</sup> and they joined with economic handicaps to prevent the development in Tennessee and the Southern states; generally, educational opportunity equal to that in other sections of the nation.

A community like Chattanooga fared much better than rural areas or smaller towns. Nevertheless, it was slow, disheartening work. The support of the *Times* was constantly thrown behind the efforts of the school authorities. It emphasized the need for improvement locally and pleaded for at least "a rudimentary education [for] every southern child, white and black. . . ." When it became known that the Methodist Episcopal Church planned the establishment of a "central

<sup>17</sup> *Acts of the Legislature, State of Tennessee . . . Called Session of the 37th General Assembly, 1872*, pp. 34-35. Henry D. Wyatt, a Dartmouth graduate, who had commanded colored troops stationed in Chattanooga, was made superintendent of the Chattanooga schools. Wyatt served as superintendent for 20 years. He started a high school in 1875, but it was not until 1904 that a separate building was provided for high-school students.

<sup>18</sup> Dabney, *op. cit.*, I, 303.



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university" for its Southern conferences, the advantages of Chattanooga for its location were immediately pointed out by the *Times*, which was supported by the public, regardless of denomination, in a series of mass meetings.<sup>19</sup>

The competition among several communities for the proposed university became quite heated, and the *Times* joined in the argument, stating in the unrestrained journalism of the day the handicaps of other places while describing in glowing terms the attractive features of Chattanooga as the seat of an institution to serve the entire region. After a decade of consideration and debate, Chattanooga was chosen in 1883 by the officials appointed by the church. Immediately, local committees were organized to solicit assistance for the project. A board of trustees was appointed, made up of representatives of the church and the community, and Chattanooga University opened its doors September 15, 1886.

An enthusiastic reporter from Ochs's paper described the new institution as "a light set upon a hill, in a literal as well as a figurative sense," as it stood high on a dominant eminence about half a mile from the center of town. However, the hopes of Chattanoogans, who had worked in a typical harmonious relationship to secure the institution, were somewhat rudely disturbed in the first year of its operations, when complex problems involving the race issue were precipitated. As the Freedmen's Aid Society of the national organization of the church held title to the property and dominated the policy of the college, the matter became one of national interest. It was debated for several years in the conferences of the church and gave Chattanooga unfavorable publicity throughout the country. Although co-racial education was never undertaken at the school, the presence of the issue weakened its position in the community. Furthermore, the contention which developed between Grant Memo-

<sup>19</sup> This branch of the Methodist Church had been virtually nonexistent in the South after the historic split in 1844 until during the later war years, it became active in the region through its work with the freedmen and found support among natives as well as its communicants who moved south to take up residence. W. B. Hesseltine, "Methodism and Reconstruction in East Tennessee," in *The East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, No. 3 (1931), pp. 42-61, is an interesting discussion of the church in the area at the time.

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rial University at Athens, another Methodist institution, and Chattanooga University resulted in the latter's being placed in a definitely subordinate role for a number of years.<sup>20</sup>

The position of the *Times* in this controversy was that it was not wise to attempt co-racial education. It consistently stood, however, for the improvement of Negro educational opportunity, and when any question of unfair discrimination arose, the editor emphatically stated the paper's opposition, and called attention to the bitterness and intolerance in such practices. As the greatest crime in this category, lynching was particularly abhorrent to both the proprietor and the editor. When such an unfortunate incident occurred in Chattanooga in 1885, the editor flayed his townsmen no less violently than he had the residents of other communities where such an uncivilized flouting of the law had happened.

The editorial read:

We say sorrowfully, we have been disappointed in our city. . . . We did not believe our constituted authorities were so weak, that our people were so careless of our city's good name, as to permit a squad of irresponsible roughs and transient citizens to batter in our splendid jail at their leisure and deliberately execute mob justice on a prisoner it was the duty of the city, county and state to protect with all their powers.

But the humiliating spectacle has come and gone. We cannot blot out the record, but we can and do demand that justice have its way with the men who trampled on law, destroyed the public property and murdered a prisoner who was certain to be executed by and through the orderly processes of the law. . . . They should be speedily taught that there is one city in this section where mobocracy is something more serious than a pastime, and murder of prisoners is merely murder.<sup>21</sup>

The efforts of the *Times* to make Chattanooga a safe place for those of any race or creed to live were all a part of its general plan to advance the community in every way. Some phases of this followed personal enthusiasms of the owner of the paper, among them the

<sup>20</sup> G. E. Govan and J. W. Livingood, *University of Chattanooga: Sixty Years*, pp. 3-60.

<sup>21</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, September 6, 1885.

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creation of a library and the construction of a theater. On larger issues the paper's position was generally liberal. It upheld the academic freedom of university faculty members, and the right of artists, whether writers or painters, to present material in their own way.<sup>22</sup> Prohibition was doomed to failure, inasmuch as it was an attempt to dictate by law a moral issue, which should be left to the individual conscience.

The paper advocated the regulation of railroad rates by a national authority long before the creation of the Interstate Commerce Commission. The exploitation of labor and the public generally, in order to create profits for greatly overcapitalized corporations, was frequently criticized. Labor should be allowed to organize, but the paper opposed the principle of the closed shop as it infringed the liberty of action of owners. As the important means to rectify such matters in a democratic society, the *Times* constantly admonished its readers about their responsibility as voters. A failure to register and vote was an admission, the editor stated, that the individual cared nothing for his city and his nation.

As a further portion of their obligation, Ochs and his associates accepted and practiced the ideal of responsible journalism. The paper should necessarily promote its community, but to do so did not mean that it should fail to state the truth, both in editorials and news stories. "A newspaper edited from its counting house is not a lovely thing," the editor said. Then he continued with another phase of the same issue, "One whose editor's utterances are revised by a political caucus is an abomination in the sight of the Lord and manly men."<sup>23</sup>

Political opponents should never be blackguarded, even though their ideas might be strenuously opposed. The *Times* "tried consistently" to tell the truth and to report fairly the attitudes of the other side, "because we believe this course to consist well with the best business prosperity," but also because not to do so disgraced the

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*, May 29, 1880, August 5, 11, 1883. The question of academic freedom was raised at the University of Tennessee, and the editor was very critical of the board of trustees of the institution for overruling the faculty. The matter of artistic censorship arose through the efforts of Anthony Comstock, then active in New York.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.*, September 12, 1883.



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profession of journalism. There was never any doubt in the minds of the paper's readers that its owner was interested in realizing a profit from his enterprise, but it was no less evident that he intended to do it in a way which involved no sacrifice of proper ethical attitudes, a position which was remarkable in a period when newspapers were largely the organs of some individual or clique interest. Ochs, then and later, may have inclined to a somewhat conservative point of view in many matters, but it was due entirely to his own belief that it was the proper course.<sup>24</sup>

His voice, as carried in the columns of the *Times*, permeated the community and the surrounding areas. Exchange editors in many of the Southeastern towns noted his growing prominence. "One of the most enterprising men in the Southern press," wrote the editor of the *Augusta Chronicle* in 1886 of the still youthful Chattanooga publisher. "He is ambitious for his city and tireless in his efforts to advance her interests and improve her connection." The *Knoxville Dispatch* had noted this six years earlier, when its editor observed that the *Times* was "one of the most aggressive and progressive papers in the State" and had "steadily and courageously" helped to build Chattanooga into "one of the most flourishing and progressive cities in the South."<sup>25</sup>

Obviously, Ochs's interest was primarily in local affairs, but his advanced thought radiated beyond Chattanooga's borders through the columns of his newspaper. "Better come to the cotton fields, cheap water power and the favorable climate of the south," the *Times* advised Northern textile owners, "than depend on railroad favor for artificial and unjust advantages that may be lost any hour."<sup>26</sup> This

<sup>24</sup> *ibid.*, October 5, 1882.

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*, September 30, 1880, quotes the *Knoxville Dispatch*; April 9, 1886, quotes the *Augusta Chronicle*. The *Times* by 1886 had grown to an average daily circulation of 4,000 an issue.

<sup>26</sup> *ibid.*, March 24, 1883. Should readers think that these opinions attribute too much to Ochs, whose attention apparently was directed more to the business management of the paper than writing, the writers would point out that both of the Ochs's newspapers, the *Chattanooga Times* and *The New York Times*, adopted and held a consistent editorial point of view after he assumed ownership of them, although editors were different and, due to the normal processes of the years, occasionally changed.

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was not an invitation to exploit natural and human resources, but a positive recommendation, from which benefit would come to the South as well as the Northern manufacturer. It was the clarion call of the New South. It recognized the social, cultural, and economic advances which would be realized from an industrial accompaniment to the prevailing agricultural economy.

Adolph S. Ochs and his co-worker, John E. MacGowan, were leaders in the movement to build the New South which, though deplored by some, has been written into the records of Southern history. Although not given the acclaim which was received by Henry W. Grady of the *Atlanta Constitution*, Richard H. Edmonds of the *Manufacturers Record*, and D. A. Tompkins of the *Charlotte Observer*, as foremost advocates of this idea, Ochs and MacGowan stood along with them as pioneers in the movement.





## CHAPTER XVI

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### *Boom and Bust*

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In the years after the Civil War, hundreds of thousands of European immigrants thronged to America's shores. Although these newcomers usually avoided the South, there were settlers and capitalists who proved exceptions. The numerous invitations from the Tennessee authorities, the rugged beauty of the countryside, and the ore and coal veins, which war veterans advertised, appealed to men of varied interests.

Among those whose attention was captured was the English geologist and metallurgist, James Bowron, Sr., who had been commissioned by a group of British associates to seek American mineral properties for development. He stopped at Chattanooga to secure advice. Leaving his heavy luggage at the Stanton House and accompanied by local guides, he set out on an exploration tour of the area. He impressed those with whom he came in contact, as he had the "manners of a Chesterfield," one reported, although, he continued, Bowron "never could get onto the way we handled Tennessee batter cakes."

After weeks of prospecting, the visitor discovered in the Sequatchie Valley veins of iron and coal in close juxtaposition. The location seemed ideal for his purpose. He determined upon a site across the Tennessee from Bridgeport for the town in which the furnaces and offices were to be erected. His personal enthusiasm for the city of Pittsburgh caused him to call the new community South Pittsburgh, while his feeling for his sovereign prompted him to give the more glamorous name of Victoria to the coal mine station on the railroad.

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The group he represented, which was composed exclusively of British capitalists,<sup>1</sup> incorporated as the Southern States Coal, Iron and Land Company. Skilled workmen were brought from the British Isles to construct and to operate the furnaces. When they and their families arrived, the prominent ex-Confederate, Tomlinson Fort, was chosen to address them on the subject, "American Liberty, Savior of the World." The first furnace was blown in May, 1879. Though the number of immigrants was small and the operation at South Pittsburgh was handicapped by a number of misfortunes, the developments there attracted an unusual amount of attention.<sup>2</sup>

Just five years after the beginning of ironmaking at South Pittsburgh, another group of British investors, this time composed of Scottish industrialists, purchased large tracts of coal, iron, and timberland on Walden's Ridge. They organized the Dayton Coal and Iron Company and established offices at Smith's Cross Roads, which had been prominent in cavalry actions in the campaign of the Chattanooga area in the 1860's, and changed its name to Dayton. Furnaces were erected and mining operations begun. A number of skilled workmen were imported to make their homes in the "Switzerland of America," as some of the promoters liked to call the mountain area of East Tennessee.<sup>3</sup>

Each new industrial development attracted, of course, a share of individuals, whether from Europe or America, seeking a place of opportunity. More interesting, however, were the definite schemes of colonization. Small groups of Germans and Swiss established themselves on the Cumberland Plateau, encouraged by the opportunity to raise stock and vegetables. But the most romantic story of this sort is that of the English colony of Rugby. The moving spirit in this idealistic venture was Thomas Hughes, onetime member of Parliament, who had gained a reputation in both the United States

<sup>1</sup> Among the investors was Thomas Whitwell, prominent metallurgist and inventor, whose name is preserved in a little mining community near the western foot of Walden's Ridge.

<sup>2</sup> Armes, *op. cit.*, pp. 377-378, 386-390; Chamberlain, *op. cit.*, p. 17; W. D. Kelley, *The Old South and the New*, pp. 68-89.

<sup>3</sup> Chamberlain, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-23; *Chattanooga News-Free Press*, March 2, 1948.

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and the British Isles by his books, *Tom Brown's School Days* and *Tom Brown at Oxford*.

As a writer and philanthropist, Hughes's sympathies were easily aroused by the plight of the younger sons of English gentry, to whom opportunity was frequently limited. To assist in alleviating their circumstances he became president of the Board of Aid to Land Ownership. This organization with its cumbersome title had as its objective the assistance of "colonists by an advantageous purchase of land in large areas and its sale in small parcels, at low prices on credit." The help of a Massachusetts organization of similar interest was secured and the United States was chosen as the location of the colony. Agents toured various parts of the country in an effort to find an area where there was a favorable combination of soil and climate. On their fourth trip of exploration, they visited the Cumberland Plateau, which not only possessed the two desired advantages, but to them were also added a heavy growth of timber and large deposits of mineral ore. Their recommendation of the Plateau received the immediate approval of the Board. By 1879, over 400,000 acres had been secured on which to plant the colony.

Although the location of the area was closer to Knoxville, the most readily available transportation was the Cincinnati Southern, which formed a consequent tie between the colony and Chattanooga. By October 5, 1880, elaborate plans for the formal opening of Rugby were completed. When the important day arrived, the train from Chattanooga brought a delegation to participate in the ceremonies. In his address of welcome, the founder stated that the aim and hope were "to plant on these highlands a community of gentlemen and ladies; not that artificial class which goes by those grand names, both in Europe and here, the joint product of feudalism and wealth, but a society in which the humblest members, who live (as we hope most if not all of them will to some extent) by the labour of their own hands, will be of such strain and culture that they will be able to meet princes . . . without embarrassment and without self-assertion. . . ."

The colony was to be co-operative, not communistic, but a healthy rivalry would be generated by competitive interests as to who might raise the best crops "or write the best books or articles; teach best,



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govern best; in a word, live most nobly,—surely here may well be scope enough for all energy, without the rivalry of shop-keeping, and the tricks of trade,—the adulteration, puffing and feverish meanesses which follow too surely in its train.”

In addition to these utopian principles, the promoters hoped for other noble attainments. “What we English want,” Hughes wrote in a description of the colony, “looking to the future, is, not only that England and America should be fast friends, but that the feeling of union in the States themselves should be developed as soundly and rapidly as possible—that all wounds should be healed, and all breaches closed, finally and for ever—for the sake of our race and of mankind. Much still remains to be done for this end, and I am convinced that a good stream of Englishmen into the Southern States may and will materially help on the good cause.”

These evidences of good intentions were confused by many difficulties which arose. The English who comprised almost the whole of the colonists were ill-fitted for the venture, nor were they disposed to learn or to apply themselves to the practical aspects which alone could make the experiment a success. Their romanticism is exemplified by a quotation from Charles Kingsley which occurred to Hughes while observing life at Rugby:

When all the world is young, lad, and all the trees are green,  
And every goose a swan, lad, and every lass a queen,—  
Then heigh for boot and horse, lad, and round the world away,  
Young blood must have its course, lad and every dog his day!

A great gulf existed between the natives and the settlers, who held themselves aloof from the mountain people. The colonists persistently clung to the manners and speech of the homeland, which caused their new neighbors to think of them as peculiar. One amusing story illustrates a part of this difference. An old man of the neighborhood died and as there was no native preacher to hold the service, the rector at Rugby was called on. “After reading the Episcopal burial service,” a contemporary account reads, “upon which the mountaineers looked with suspicion as being the ‘quare doin’s’ of those ‘furriners,’ the rector solemnly announced, ‘And now will all the friends of the deceased

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please pass around the bier?' The elder son could stand this blasphemy no longer and he jumped to his feet and shouted, 'I know Pa was a drinkin' man, but I'll be danged if yer serve drinks at his funeral.'"

Nor were the people of the mountain area impressed by the desire of the newcomers for comfort. One of the neighbors observed a wagonload of chairs which were being taken to the hotel from the railway. He commented, as they passed by, "You're all aiming to sit down up there, ain't you?"

He was wrong, but the gentleman pioneers did consider the whole venture a great lark. They organized tennis clubs, brought in blooded horses, and promoted other recreational activities, instead of leading the peasant's life or preparing themselves for the practical business of making a living. Many of their hours were spent in debating clubs, dramatic and musical organization, and writing articles for their newspapers. A considerable proportion of them were "remittance men" and were unwilling to accept the idea of Rugby as their permanent residence.

For some time, however, planning and building continued, and ultimately a church, commissary, library, hotel, and dwellings with their quaint architecture were completed. Parks, with deer reservations and formal gardens, offered a picturesque contrast to the wild, natural background. For a time, the forest gave way to the will of Rugby's management, but realistic difficulties shortly began to weigh too heavily. Although a little cluster of buildings still stands in Rugby amid the forest as a monument to the idealistic founder, and a nucleus of descendants remains to reminisce upon its onetime potentialities, the one thousand or more Englishmen who once made it their residing place never fulfilled their vision. Within the scope of a few years, the colony was recognized as a failure.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee: Being Some Account of the Settlement Founded on the Cumberland Plateau*, etc. pp. 46, 102, 106, 118.; K. B. Stott, *Rugby, Tennessee: An Attempted Utopia*, pp. 117-118; M. Hamer, "Thomas Hughes and His American Rugby," *North Carolina Historical Review*, V (Oct., 1928), 390-412; *Chattanooga Times*, October 6, 7, 1880; J. N. Clarke, "History of Alaardt," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, IX (1925-26), 185-186. All these sources were used in the preparation of this sketch of Rugby. The page references, except for the periodical articles, designate direct quotations.

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All the colonization attempts, whether close by or not, whether practical, as in the case of South Pittsburgh, or visionary, as at Rugby, were promptly acclaimed in Chattanooga as additional evidences that the area was coming into its own. The newspapers, particularly the *Times*, used every such opportunity to proclaim to the town, the state, and the nation, in fact, to all who would listen, that the mineral sections of East Tennessee, North Georgia, and North Alabama were destined to be the heart of the industrial Southeast and that Chattanooga was naturally the spot from which all such activity would radiate. "Chattanooga is not envious of any growing town, near or far," the *Times* said editorially. "Chattanooga is on her way, [and] she won't quarrel with any who enter the race with her. . . ."<sup>5</sup>

The conviction that Chattanooga was "on her way" was a natural conclusion to all which had been happening. As the 1880's continued, the infectious appeal of a growing American city with a constantly expanding industrial opportunity spread throughout the town's population. New plants opened, the most prominent of them being the Citico Furnace Company, which was incorporated in 1883 and blown in the following year with typical, enthusiastic ceremonies. Business leaders secured profits from these activities, but the little men, many of them newcomers and of a younger generation, also sought to realize some of the advantages which they saw about them. The easiest way, because it required little capital at the start, was investment in real estate, which would necessarily enhance in value as Chattanooga developed. The natural outcome was that typical American phenomenon, a land boom.

Town lots and farms in the area had frequently changed hands as the town had grown. But as the psychology of expansion became more dominant, some incidental speculators began to dream of larger ventures. They were supported in their vision by the *Times*, which emphasized in news stories and editorials that the trading was not speculative, but based upon a reasoned belief in the town's future. The paper insisted that such derogatory comments as "bucketshop dealing in dirt" were unjustified. There was a sound basis for the increase of values. However, the headlines grow more and more ex-

<sup>5</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, May 19, 1881.



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citing in their content: "Higher and Higher," one read; "Chattanooga Enjoying Magnificent Boom" was another; but the paper really expressed its sentiments when it used "A Boom As Is a Boom" to explain what was going on.

Some of the more easily discouraged feared the consequences of another great flood which afflicted the whole Tennessee Valley in April, 1886. The muddy river water spread over the town and the surrounding lowlands. City authorities organized relief parties as usual to perform their missions. They were joined by hardy promoters of real estate who were willing to sell a little extra water with the land and took their prospective buyers down the flooded streets to point out the merits of property. In the event the sale was lost, they could revive their spirits by tying up at the second story window of a saloonkeeper, who sat on the ledge with bottle and glasses "selling white corn whiskey to any thirsty, chilly [or] overheated poor wet individuals who might chance to be out and pass that way."<sup>6</sup>

The boom by no means abated as a result of the high water. Although another crop of preventive flood measures was discussed, chief interest remained with plats, options, and real estate deeds. The *Times* reported that "'Boom' and 'option' divide the honors, with 'option' the favorite." Suburban areas began to attract attention as the feverishness of speculation heightened. Former farms were staked out in subdivisions, as the completion of the Belt Line Railroad made transportation to them available. The names Ridgedale, St. Elmo,<sup>7</sup> Sherman Heights, Highland Park, and Hill City made prominent appearance in advertisements and news stories. The *Times* increased from its customary four to eight pages to sixteen, half of which were devoted to real estate advertising. The national magazine, *Harper's Monthly*, lent its assistance by sending artists and writers to report on what was occurring at Chattanooga. When the article—by Edmund Kirke (J. R. Gilmore) entitled, "The Southern Gateway of the Alleghanies"—appeared,<sup>8</sup> the *Times* reprinted it in full.

<sup>6</sup> Wiltse Manuscript, p. 865.

<sup>7</sup> This community at the foot of Lookout Mountain takes its name from the novel by Augusta Evans Wilson, the scene of which is there.

<sup>8</sup> *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, LXXIV (Apr., 1887), 695-676; *Chattanooga Times*, March 27, 1887.

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Men abandoned their businesses to become "curbstone operators" in the real estate market, and numerous syndicates to handle the larger developments were organized. Every possible means was employed to stimulate the attention of local residents and outside capitalists. Horses were covered with streamers, and brass bands led parades, which were augmented by hired marchers, to the places of auction. Wagons and buggies, carrying men beating drums, drew attention to special bargains. Barbecues were advertised in an effort to draw crowds. In fact, all joined to give the impression of an intense political campaign or a gala street carnival.

The residents and visitors were, however, still disturbed by roaming cows and pigs, and children were frightened by hissing geese, which wandered freely. Many agitated to remove these symbols of an outworn rural mode, and the *Times* agreed with a friendly Southern critic that "Chattanooga should boom her dirty streets. We understand that the boom has struck everything but the streets."<sup>9</sup> The editor of the local paper commented that the conditions were "simply shameful and disgraceful." Such indictments formed good ammunition for the bond campaign, which was before the public, to improve the local thoroughfares. Unfortunately the referendum failed, but the efforts to raise subscriptions for such cultural centers as a library and an adequate theater were successful.

In keeping with the spirit of the boom, seats for the opening performance at the opera house were auctioned off to the highest bidder. But with all the signs of speculative interest, permanent values adhered to the community. A building boom shortly followed, as a companion to the real estate interest; residences and business houses went up in many sections. Although the town overbuilt, the structures were there for whatever use might develop, and Chattanooga lost some of its appearance of a straggling village.

The expansion placed new burdens upon the community's utilities. The purchase of the old Civil War waterworks by a national concern attracted much attention, as the new owners planned the installation of an expanded system with the most modern equipment. The street railway company, which still used small horse-drawn cars, no longer

<sup>9</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, Feb. 10, 1886, quoting the *Augusta Chronicle*.

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sufficed to meet the demands of local transportation, so new lines were built.<sup>10</sup>

A variety of other facilities were projected to convey prospective purchasers of property as well as residents to and from outlying areas. Some of these were constructed, while others never passed the stage of plans. The one major development was the building of the Chattanooga, Rome and Columbus Railroad, which had been agitated for many years. In 1887, the city voted a bond issue of \$100,000 to assist the project. For the ground-breaking ceremonies, interestingly enough, the young William Gibbs McAdoo was chosen as the speaker. Born in Marietta, Georgia, in 1863, he had come to Chattanooga in 1882, where he engaged in the practice of law and other activities. Despite his youth he had begun to occupy an important position in the city of his adoption, when he turned the first spadeful of earth on this road, which was completed three years later.<sup>11</sup>

Among the exponents of a greater and better community were the members of the Iron, Coal and Manufacturers' Association, an organization which had given stability to economic and cultural leadership. In March, 1887, it was reorganized, so that persons with commercial, as well as industrial, interests<sup>12</sup> could be admitted to membership, and was renamed the Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce. However, it was left to individuals to take the initiative in new plans and developments.

<sup>10</sup> The original installation had been made more than a decade before with elaborate fanfare. According to local tradition, the owner invited city officials to ride on the first car and provided a brass band for the occasion. The team of green, young mules, excited by the blare of the horns and the cheers of the crowd, balked. In the consequent excitement, all the passengers, including the owner, a man of much *avoids*, rushed forward. The little car tipped on its end, and the auspicious beginning hovered for a moment on the edge of tragedy.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*, January 31, 1887. The Chattanooga, Rome and Columbus Railroad is now a part of the Central of Georgia. McAdoo remained in Chattanooga until 1892.

<sup>12</sup> An example of the expanding commercial interest was the organization of Mutual Medical Aid and Accident Insurance Company of Tennessee, the title of which was changed in the next year, 1888, to the Provident Life and Accident Insurance Company. Two other important insurance companies have since been organized in Chattanooga: The Volunteer State Life Insurance Company in 1903, and the Interstate Life and Accident Insurance Company in 1909.



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Chattanooga was making the most of all its advantages except those afforded by its neighboring heights. As already stated, there had been some efforts to attract tourists and summer residents to Lookout Mountain before 1860, but since, little attention had been given to such activities. In the eighties, expansionists again began to realize the possibilities of the mountains. Among them was a youthful Chattanooga, who was well known to his fellow townsmen. Like his predecessors in promoting Chattanooga—Samuel Williams, James A. Whiteside, John T. Wilder, and Adolph S. Ochs—his vision knew no bounds.

Charles E. James came to Chattanooga in 1852 as an infant with his parents, who were native East Tennesseans. By 1880 he was established in the railroad and iron supply business as one of Chattanooga's prominent merchants. In that year the Chattanooga Western Railroad was incorporated with James as secretary and treasurer. This company planned to use the railway to bring coal and iron from Walden's Ridge, where large holdings had been secured, to furnaces in town. Included also in the plan was the development of a community on a spur of the ridge, where a Federal signal station had been located in the war. The town was given the name Signal Point City and the sale of lots began. However, difficulties arose and the project was suspended.<sup>13</sup> This failure did not discourage the young promoter, who had already realized the opportunity of connecting the industrial plants and the suburban areas with the railroad terminals and the center of the city by the construction of a belt railroad. When this was opened in 1885, James, in association with others, turned to Lookout Mountain, planned and constructed a broad gauge railroad up the mountain, and shared in the development of the elaborate Lookout Inn, erected on the top.<sup>14</sup>

Adolph Ochs, whose share in building the frenzied boom activity in Chattanooga can hardly be overestimated, ultimately began to be bitten by his own bug. Like those he influenced, his ventures in the

<sup>13</sup> A succession of companies attempted to carry the project forward, but it was not until James, 30 years after the original venture, again took the lead that a streetcar line was completed to Signal Mountain, as the name became, and the community developed.

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*, October 2, 1925; *Chattanooga News*, October 2, 1925.

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real estate market were small and conservative at first, but as time went on, his enthusiasm and imagination carried him as the columns of his paper affected others. The end result was his participation in several large syndicates, the most spectacular of which was the Chattanooga Land, Coal, Iron and Railway Company, or, as it was locally known, the "Over-the-river" company. When the organization of this activity was announced, it was called "stupendous," and "the most gigantic company yet organized in the South." Three bridges were to be built across the river, where but a ferry ran at the time. The projected Chattanooga Western Railroad was to become a reality. Blast furnaces, coke ovens, mines, and sawmills were a part of the plan, and talk even ran to oil and gas wells. The purchase of more than 20,000 acres of land was included. \$100,000 was to be used in the development of a city north of the river. The total capitalization was \$12,000,000, but when all was completed, the prospectus confidently announced, the conservative value of the project would be \$50,000,000.<sup>15</sup>

It was a grandiose scheme which wildly excited all Chattanooga. It was definitely expected that large numbers of people from other areas would be attracted by the possibilities of this investment. Steamboats were consequently prepared, and with bands playing and banners flying were ready to shuttle any persons who showed interest and evidence of capital from Suck Creek below the city to Chickamauga Creek on the north, between which points the property of the company lay.

Great things were in prospect, but when the company's books were opened, takers were scarce and but a small portion of the capital was subscribed. However, for a few days, news of the "Over-the-river Company" continued to dominate the whole real estate bubble. Then it suddenly disappeared from prominent mention. In fact the boom days were over in Chattanooga real estate. Even before the spectacular appearance of this largest of the promoters' efforts, sales had been getting less frequent. The townfolk began to see that all they were doing was exchanging deeds for each other's money and credit, and paper profits were all that were being realized. It was to be years

<sup>15</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, March 23, 1887.

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before the real value of the lots which changed hands so frequently reached anything approximating the prices they then commanded. Chattanooga's exciting orgy was over. Only the mortgage debts remained to plague their holders.<sup>16</sup>

Some of the older and more conservative business leaders had viewed with interest and amusement the furious trading in land which had been going on. At times, if the truth were known, when the venture contained reasonable assurance of profit, they stepped in, but almost immediately stepped out again, never to be caught in the web of the boom. Their minds were still concentrated upon activities where returns were possibly not so quick. They had been trained in a school in which the margin between failure and success was narrow. They continued their plans for the development of mineral and timber resources. These men were a stabilizing influence upon those who had abandoned themselves to get-rich-quick schemes. Nor, in justice to the latter, should one forget to state that they were not completely downcast and discouraged by what had occurred. For a time, some may have reflected with chagrin upon the evaporation of apparent fortunes, but the majority had the ebullience and the optimism of youth. When called to the task by the conservative leaders, they responded with a fervor almost equal to that of the time when they had been swapping options.

<sup>16</sup> Among the worst sufferers from this circumstance was Adolph Ochs, although it was to be, paradoxically, the cause of his greater renown. Saddled by his huge speculative debt, he still refused to accept the alternative of voluntary bankruptcy. Realizing that he had to create the chance for a larger income to rid himself of his burden, he sought to purchase another newspaper. He had learned one lesson from the experience: that he was a good newspaperman, and he determined, consequently, to stick to his own profession. After months of seeking, he discovered that he could buy *The New York Times*. It necessitated his assuming a heavier debt, but it was only by doing so that he could secure the necessary additional income. The story of his success with that great newspaper does not lie within the bounds of this narrative, but readers are assured that had it not been for the excesses of his participation in the Chattanooga boom, he more than likely would have been content to remain one of the successful publishers of an American small-town paper and would never have achieved the great reputation that he did; nor, as it probably is obvious to say, would America, itself, have received the unquestioned benefits of one of its greatest and most responsible journals of opinion.



## Boom and Bust

Steel gave a new direction to Chattanooga industry and a new impetus to business in general. For the five years or more, preceding the boom, the iron industry had been in poor condition. Pioneers looked ahead to the manufacturing of steel products by improved methods. Northern mills had been making steel for more than a quarter of a century; but Southern plants were unable to meet their competition, both because of the quality of the local ones and the lack of markets close at hand.

The first steelmaking in the area by any process was done in a small plant at Kingston in 1876. The owners shortly moved it to Chattanooga, where it was immediately overshadowed by the larger Roane Iron Company. The latter began the manufacture of steel by the acid, open-hearth process in 1878, but a sudden drop in steel prices caused the closing of this operation within five years. However, the company was unwilling to abandon the effort to make steel from local ores, and on May 7, 1887, almost as the real estate boom collapsed, the announcement came that rails had been produced by the Bessemer process in the Roane plant. This was not only the first time such a thing had been done in Chattanooga but it was also the first such accomplishment in the old Confederate states.<sup>17</sup>

Enthusiasm again reigned, as evidenced by the way the *Times* greeted the successful first run: "Yesterday should be marked with a white stone in the calendar of Chattanooga, to commemorate the successful making of steel rails in the Roane Iron Company's remodeled mill. It is the first instance of the sort in this section, and marks an epoch in the history of the South—and still more of this city—whose outcome will bring added population and prosperity. . . . Its success is due very largely to the business foresight, practical ability, and indomitable energy of Captain H. S. Chamberlain. Seeing clearly the inevitable needs of the New South's future, and comprehending intuitively and fully the logic of events, he started to blaze the way in a pioneer path which will at no distant day be the broad highway for commercial wealth."<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> The year before, the South Tredegar Iron and Nail Company had produced Bessemer steel experimentally in Chattanooga. V. S. Clark, *History of Manufactures in the United States*, II, 240.

<sup>18</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, May 8, 1887.

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The enthusiasm was premature, as another drop in the price of steel forced the mill to close. Before the effect upon the community became too disastrous, the Roane Iron Company sold the mill to the newly formed Southern Iron Company in 1889. This organization was composed of a group of entrepreneurs who had been active industrialists and investors in the Chattanooga area for some years. They had been particularly interested in the development of the Tennessee Coal, Iron and Rail Road Company, known popularly as the "TCI." This company, which was the result of a combination of several lesser ones, grew to be the greatest of all the Southern corporations to utilize mineral resources.

The embryo of this colossus was the Sewanee Mining Company, established in 1852 to dig coal on the Cumberland Plateau. Here under the leadership of Samuel F. Tracy of New York City, seams were opened and a spectacular mountain railroad built to the mines.<sup>19</sup> In 1860 the company was reorganized as the Tennessee Coal and Railroad Company, only to have its career cut short by the war. The mines were reopened in 1866, and Southern capital assumed control of the company after a court sale. The management of the concern in these early years changed so frequently that one historian has remarked, "The early presidents of the Tennessee Coal and Railroad Company were somewhat like Finnegan's message to Flanagan, 'On agin, off agin—gone agin.'"<sup>20</sup>

Two men—both Tennesseans—were relatively constant members of the company. Alfred M. Shook, when only twenty-one years old, joined the firm as a clerk in one of its stores in 1866. He had been a member of Forrest's cavalry until captured and remained in Federal prisons until the end of the war. Called the "best-looking young fellow on Big Mountain," he soon propelled himself into a position of responsibility. J. C. Warner, the other of the two, was an older man who was serving as mayor of Chattanooga at the opening of the Civil War. Poor health, which plagued him all his life, prevented Warner

<sup>19</sup> It was this company which by its gift of 10,000 acres to the University of the South had prevented Chattanooga's securing that institution. Tracy City, on the Cumberland Plateau, bears the promoter's name.

<sup>20</sup> Arnes, *op. cit.*, p. 374.

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from joining the army. However, he was a member of the state legislature and his sympathies were with the Confederacy. Warner was made manager of the company in 1868. Together, he and Shook struggled to keep the organization alive. It was no easy task. On one occasion the sheriff of a county, in an effort to collect past due taxes amounting to only sixteen dollars and forty cents, levied on the only tangible property he could find, an old mule named Kate. The beast proved stubborn and refused to be driven to the county seat. Such loyalty impressed Shook, who, as he said, "scurried all around over the country to raise that sixteen dollars and forty cents, for we had all sooner gone without breakfast than lose Kate. I got it at last and Fry Nunnally, Kate's driver, and all of us were happy, and so was Kate."<sup>21</sup>

Needing to find a new source of income, Warner and Shook decided to construct coke ovens. Since they had no scientific knowledge, they went to Pennsylvania to learn the process for making this fuel. Incidentally, they also learned how to smelt ore. Upon their return, they constructed a hundred coke ovens, and when they found their coal would coke successfully, the two decided to carry their experimentation further. They built an amateur furnace, which they gleefully named the "Fiery Gizzard." This experience led Warner into other investments in ironmaking in Chattanooga and nearby Rising Fawn, Georgia.

Some short time later, the Tennessee Coal and Railroad Company underwent one of its periodic reorganizations. For several years the mines had been operated with convict labor, but the company had not been able to meet the payments due the concern which held the convict lease from the state. As a result, ownership changed, although Shook continued in his position as general manager. With the assistance of the new capital and remembering the success of the Fiery Gizzard, Shook led the way in organizing and building the Sewanee Furnace Company at Cowan, Tennessee, where the line of the Tennessee Coal and Railroad Company made a junction with the Nashville and Chattanooga. Despite all its activities and colorful history, the company was still small and undistinguished.

<sup>21</sup> *ibid.*, p. 375.



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In 1881 for the first time a man experienced in large financial operations was drawn into the organization. John H. Inman was another Tennessean who had worn the gray uniform. After the war he went to New York, and achieved a major reputation in the cotton business, winning for himself the interesting designation, "a carpetbagger in Wall Street." Under his direction the company was again reorganized, its various interests merged, and its name changed to the Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Company.<sup>22</sup> Warner rejoined as president, and Shook stayed at his post. Inman brought a new figure into the concern, Nathaniel Baxter, Jr., another veteran of Forrest's cavalry and resident of Nashville.

Baxter initiated negotiations with the English company at South Pittsburgh to acquire their holdings. The owners of the latter had been discouraged by the difficulties of running the business at such a distance. As a result, the Southern States Iron and Land Company was absorbed in 1882 by the Tennessee organization, which thereby became the largest holder of mineral properties and furnaces in the state.<sup>23</sup> But its promoters were not content to rest with this laurel, and in 1886 they moved into the Birmingham, Alabama, area. There they acquired the important Pratt Coal and Iron Company and inaugurated a vigorous policy of expansion. From this point on, the history of the Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Company disassociates itself from the Chattanooga area, although it continued to operate the mines and furnaces in Tennessee.

Despite the large developments at Birmingham, Chattanooga still disputed primacy in the field. The former city was new, whereas Chattanooga had been making iron since the days when the East Tennessee Iron Manufacturing Company began operations in the 1850's. Impetus was given this feeling by the four men—Warner, Shook, Inman, and Baxter—who had pioneered the TCI, when they joined with others to organize the Southern Iron Company to produce basic steel in Chattanooga. In preparation for this new activity, Colonel Shook and Captain Chamberlain, who was one of the direc-

<sup>22</sup> This company was incorporated Sept. 16, 1881. *Acts of the State of Tennessee, Passed by the 43rd General Assembly*, p. 443.

<sup>23</sup> Armes, *op. cit.*, p. 390; Clark, *op. cit.*, II, 242. Clark calls the development "one of the largest . . . in the South."

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tors of the new company, went to England to learn the new process and to hire an expert to manage their plant.<sup>24</sup>

On September 16, 1890, the plant produced the first "basic" steel ever to be made in the Southern states. The effort to make Bessemer steel three years before had failed because local ores were not adapted to the process. The new method, it was confidently believed, would be successful and revolutionize the industry in the area, and thus place it on a par with that of the North. Again the *Times* heralded the new accomplishment with headlines: "THE SOUTH'S BEST FRIEND"; "RED LETTER DAY FOR CHATTANOOGA"; "ENTERPRISE AND PLUCK HAS ITS REWARD"; "THE SOUTH IS FREE: THE SOUTH REJOICES."<sup>25</sup>

In celebration of the event, a gala banquet was held on March 12, 1891. The dinner, served on tin plates made from metal produced at the mill, brought together national celebrities and the leaders of the area. Abram Hewitt wrote a letter which was read expressing his regret that he could not be present. He had believed from the beginning in Chattanooga's future, he said, and only circumstances had interfered to prevent the earlier manufacture of basic steel there. Senators and congressmen, among them such well known figures as William McKinley, Joseph Cannon, and Fighting Joe Wheeler, joined in the enthusiasm of the occasion.

Attention was naturally directed to the Tennesseans whose organizing ability had made the plant possible. They offer an interesting comparison to the earlier group who in 1847, started the iron industry in Chattanooga but failed to realize their expectations. These later men, though also without technical training, had achieved success in their organization of the TCI. But, like their forerunners of the prewar period, their venture in Chattanooga, despite its promise at the start, was unsuccessful. The operation continued for something more than a year, but the handicaps were too great to be overcome.

The failure in steel again was a heavy blow to Chattanooga's prospects. Ever since the Civil War, the basis of the town's economy had

<sup>24</sup> They engaged the young English ironmaster, Benjamin Talbot, who after a stay in America, returned home and invented the continuous steel process, an accomplishment which won him knighthood and wealth.

<sup>25</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, September 17, 1890.

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been built on the use of the iron and coal of the area. Now that steel was to take the place of iron, the poor quality of the ore, which was found only in thin veins and was high in phosphorous content, became an insurmountable handicap. Nevertheless, some furnaces continued to operate to furnish pig for the use of fabricating plants, which grew in importance in the ensuing years. But the local furnaces had a new competition, which they could not turn aside. After 1871, when Birmingham was first incorporated, it slowly emerged as a rival. Chattanooga at first ridiculed its growth and refused to be concerned with its progress. But after the time the TCI group entered the Alabama field and combinations brought order to the industry, the race became uneven. With mountains of coal and iron in close juxtaposition, the new city of Vulcan enjoyed a natural advantage which could not be contested. As a consequence, Chattanooga slipped into a minor position; the day when iron was king in its environs was gone.<sup>26</sup>

In the interim between the bursting of the real estate bubble and the failure of the steel experiment, Chattanooga continued to enjoy steady improvement in its business activities. Though the frenzied dealings in land were a thing of the past, there was sufficient interest in the community's future to cause constant trading in lots and tracts, at, however, more reasonable prices. The participants in the large land syndicates tried to keep up an air of activity and sought outside capital in an effort to realize the elaborate prospects they had envisioned. A number of new banking houses were started, so that in

<sup>26</sup> In the preparation of this story of the economic competition between Birmingham and Chattanooga, several major sources have been used. Armes, *op. cit.*, beginning at page 330 and extending practically through the rest of the volume, tells the story of the TCI and associated firms in detail, with particular emphasis upon personalities. Clark, *op. cit.*, II, 230-243, contains a few errors in detail, as, for example, where he cites 1882 as the date for the assumption of the name, Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Company, and August, 1891, as the date of the making of basic steel at Chattanooga. Chamberlain, *op. cit.*, has but few references to the Birmingham developments but is good on the East Tennessee phases. Newspaper references have been given as used. For those interested in an account of the absorption of the TCI by the United States Steel Corporation in 1907, F. L. Allen, *The Great Pierpont Morgan*, pp. 259-264, will prove enlightening without too great detail.



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1892 a total of fourteen such institutions competed to serve the financial needs of the community.

In midsummer of 1889, a part of the expanded street car service was electrified and met with much typical public opposition. The people in general had little knowledge of this newest development in the use of electricity, as the first such system had been started in Richmond, Virginia, only a year before.<sup>27</sup> The public resented the regulation that cars would stop only at street corners to receive and discharge passengers. The mule cars had stopped wherever one wished to get on or off, while some obliging drivers would allow their lady passengers, in particular, to go into stores for a moment's shopping, as the car awaited their pleasure.

Other and more technically minded individuals feared the effect of the "powerful current" upon their watches and knives, which they knew would be magnetized and ruined. Even the telephone company was disturbed by the new development and entered an injunction suit, claiming that the electrical current used to propel the cars had a force of 300 volts, "1,000 times the force of the delicate current" used by the phone company. This, they maintained, would destroy the effectiveness of their service. However, the chancellor did not participate in the fear of the company and refused to grant the injunction.<sup>28</sup>

All the utility companies encountered objections from many of the citizens to the erection of poles on which to hang their wires in the vicinity of residences and business houses. Court actions were frequent, while some rugged individualists undertook to block developments in a variety of ways, usually more humorous than effective. One gentleman ran the gamut. When a hole was dug in front of his property, he established himself in an easy chair over it and held a shotgun in his arms in "a campaign of prevention." He obtained an injunction also, but the company made no defense apparently, legal or otherwise. Biding its time and working at night, it had

<sup>27</sup> Eliot Jones and T. C. Bigham, *Principles of Public Utilities*, pp. 44, 52.

<sup>28</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, June 12, 22, 1889; Wiltse Manuscript, pp. 472, 540, 544. The mule car service was discontinued completely August 12, 1891.

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another hole dug near the one "protected by injunction," and the pole was immediately erected.<sup>29</sup>

If Chattanoogaans were reluctant to accept innovations of this sort, they received with customary acclamation new developments of a more traditional nature. When James promoted another railroad, the Chattanooga Southern, to open a new area between the city and Gadsden, Alabama, there was an enthusiastic response from local sources. However, most of the money came from outside investors—as was generally true in this phase of local economic history.<sup>30</sup> The opening of the Muscle Shoals Canal in 1890 was a real victory for rivermen who were joined immediately by business interests, since the latter saw an opportunity to use river transportation as a club with which to bring railroad rates down. In the same period another local obstacle created by the Tennessee was overcome, when for the first time a steel bridge connecting the areas north of the river with the community was constructed. This caused the disappearance of the ferries, which except for the short period of the military bridge had provided the only transportation over the stream.<sup>31</sup>

These signs of growth continued to attract newcomers, but one, at least, found the most convincing arguments to cast his lot with Chattanooga in its natural beauty. He was a newspaperman and planned to establish a new journal, but was repeatedly discouraged by the stories he was told. Determined to make a thorough investigation, he stayed in town and, as visitors did and still do, took a trip to the top of Lookout Mountain. "I spent about four or five hours there," he has reported; "in fact, I sat on one bench until the lights of the city began to flicker. I was especially impressed with a city which had such a marvelous place overlooking it. Immediately I made up my mind that I would not look for any other place in which to live, but would locate in Chattanooga and live on Lookout Mountain."<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 541-543.

<sup>30</sup> This railroad experienced financial vicissitudes and went through several reorganizations before James, himself, acquired control. It is now known as the Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia, popularly as the "TAG."

<sup>31</sup> The Walnut Street Bridge was dedicated February 18, 1891, with elaborate ceremonies.

<sup>32</sup> J. B. Pound, *Memoirs*, pp. 37-38.

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Jerome B. Pound was a Georgian who had gained journalistic experience in Macon. Like Ochs, Pound had not achieved his majority when he came to Chattanooga. Both were self-made men, who had entered the newspaper business as young boys and learned its every phase by experience. Interestingly enough the first issue of the *Chattanooga News*, an evening paper, appeared July 1, 1888, the same month in which Ochs assumed control of the *Times*, a decade earlier. In the first issue, the newcomer stated his belief in the town. "Chattanooga is destined to prosper even more than the brightest anticipations her most enthusiastic admirers now predict. The tide has just begun to rise, and we desire to ride on the great sea of happiness and prosperity that stretches out before her."<sup>33</sup>

Like its morning competitor, the *News* was Democratic in politics, an interesting fact in view of the consistent Republican majorities cast by the city and county. The new paper was attacked by the same difficulties which had created the numerous failures in the journalistic history of Chattanooga, but the energy and will of the owner carried it successfully through its lean years. For the next half century, the *News* proved an able competitor of the *Times* in advancing the interests of the city and its area.<sup>34</sup>

Such optimistic views of Chattanooga's history were based upon local and regional circumstances. The town had surmounted every adversity which had attacked it, and it had had many in its history. "Where are we at?" an old veteran wrote colorfully. "Why right here, where we have been since the town was incorporated, and we are growing, pushing ahead, and we intend to keep right on. We have been tried by flood, fire, cholera and yellow fever, and went right on, but when the boom hit us we turned a double somersault, but, true to our past history, we alighted on both feet, and faced to

<sup>33</sup> *Chattanooga News*, July 26, 1938. This anniversary edition carries the newspaper's history in an article, "The Biography of a Newspaper," by Walter C. Johnson.

<sup>34</sup> Pound sold the *News* January 6, 1909, to George Fort Milton, Sr., a descendant of Dr. Tomlinson Fort, one of the earlier promoters of Chattanooga, Curtis B. Johnson, and Walter C. Johnson. The purchase price, according to W. C. Johnson's historical account, was exactly 100 times the original investment made by Pound. *Chattanooga News*, July 26, 1938.



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the front. It was a hard lick, but we are going to survive it, and that is the best thing we can do about it. . . ."<sup>35</sup>

Few if any local citizens comprehended how hard a blow the failure to make steel successfully from local ores was to prove to the town's industry. However, Chattanooga still had a backlog of economic strength in its steady business of timber use and the fabrication of iron products. But for expansion it was to be forced to turn to new materials and new methods.

To add to the complexity of this local problem, a greater one was gathering. As the result of a long train of events, the Panic of 1893 brought to the whole nation widespread unemployment and all the concomitant sufferings. The effect in Chattanooga was much the same as that upon a multitude of American industrial communities. Runs on banks resulted in closings. Industries stopped operating, and businesses of all sorts were thrown into bankruptcy. Jobs and savings were consequently lost. Clearing house certificates were used to assist in the currency shortage, and relief measures were introduced to care for the destitute. A program devised to provide work at wages of a bare subsistence level for all capable of it was set up. In fact, all the usual formulae of depression days were applied.

Evidences of hard times appeared in most of the issues of the newspapers of the period. Some were very depressing, but one news story, at least, showed a strange application of the stringency. "If you will stand," a reporter noted, "in the front of the entrance of the opera house any night during the hour before the time set for the performance within, you cannot fail to notice the disparity between the number of men entering who are escorting ladies and the number who are escorting themselves. The difference between what things used to be in this respect and what they are now is great. . . . Time was when every girl of ordinary popularity had from two to three invitations a week to the theater. Now she considers herself fortunate if not popular if she receives one."<sup>36</sup>

Financial depression, as always, had a multitude of consequences. One was to give additional impetus to a tendency which had already

<sup>35</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, June 4, 1893, article by A. J. Gahagan.

<sup>36</sup> *ibid.*, October 14, 1894.

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become evident in American business, that toward a consolidation of small enterprises into large corporations. As early as 1887, the Richmond and Danville and the Richmond and West Point Terminal railroads, two Virginia corporations, had come under the presidency of John H. Inman. He planned a great rail system for the South, and acquired control, along with other roads, of the East Tennessee, Virginia and Georgia. As the latter already dominated the Alabama Great Southern, which in turn held the lease on the Cincinnati Southern, this complex arrangement made Chattanooga a major center in the new network.

Fourteen years earlier, the Nashville and Chattanooga had merged with other connecting lines to become the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis. These two major systems directed their attention to the Western and Atlantic Railroad, connecting Chattanooga and Atlanta, which was still the key line of the area. The state of Georgia had ceased its operation of the road in 1871, when an operating company leased it. The lease expired in 1890, and it was hoped by the state authorities that keen competition would be evidenced in the bidding and thus increase the amount of the rental. However, an agreement was apparently reached between the two major competitors, and the N. C. & St. L. was awarded the lease.<sup>37</sup>

The large schemes of the promoters of the Virginia combination crashed under the strain of the panic. The great banking house of Drexel, Morgan and Company was called upon by a committee of stockholders to effect a reorganization. Samuel Spencer, a Georgian by birth and an ex-Confederate soldier, who had graduated as a civil engineer from the University of Virginia, was given the task. After many years of practical railroad experience, he had become the railroad expert for the New York bankers. The procedures of reorganization involved extremely complex financial arrangements. They included "executing two trustees' sales, one receiver's sale, ten foreclosure sales, six conveyances without foreclosure, and all manner of other contracts and agreements." The result was the creation of the

<sup>37</sup> Johnston, *op. cit.*, pp. 71-72. The bids for the lease were: N. C. & St. L., \$35,001; Richmond & West Point Terminal and Warehouse Company, \$35,000. The amounts were the monthly rental, and the lease was for 29 years. The new lessee took charge December 27, 1890.

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Southern Railroad Company July 1, 1894, with Spencer as president.<sup>38</sup>

The first of the Chattanooga railroads to be affected by the new consolidation was the East Tennessee, Virginia and Georgia. Although it continued to be called the "E. T. V. & G" by old-timers in the area for many years, on August 1, 1894, the new symbol of the Southern appeared on engines and cars throughout the system. The status of Chattanooga as a railroad junction was soon changed to that of a hub in this great system, as the Alabama Great Southern, the Cincinnati Southern, and finally the Memphis and Charleston were brought under the operating control of the Southern.

The gathering of the various independent roads into these two systems emphasized a difficulty which had been annoying Chattanooga shippers for many years. In 1881, the opinion was openly noted that railroads were discriminating in rates against Chattanooga.<sup>39</sup> Some years later an appeal was made to the Interstate Commerce Commission for an adjustment. Although they received a favorable decision, the shippers got no relief, as the railroad refused to comply. The Commission instituted suit to force the roads to accept the order, but the local interests tired of the long, legal process and decided to attempt more direct action.<sup>40</sup> Competition alone, they believed, would force the railroads to lower rates, and with the intention of developing it, a local steamboat company was organized at a mass meeting held in August, 1891.

Local traffic on the river had been constant since the end of the Civil War. One major company, the Tennessee River Transportation Company, operated steamboats in the early 1890's, but the impression was general that this organization co-operated with the railroads in maintaining rates.

Just as in previous periods, log rafts and flatboats vied on the river, even as tugs and barges made their appearance, and kept the Chattanooga river front a lively place. "The merry songs of the happy-go-lucky roustabouts, the yelling and profanity of a number of draymen,

<sup>38</sup> Fairfax Harrison, *A History of the Legal Development of the Railroad System of Southern Railway Company*, part 1, pp. 40-76; Allen, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

<sup>39</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, August 24, 1881.

<sup>40</sup> This case went to the United States Supreme Court, where in 1901 it was decided against the Interstate Commerce Commission and Chattanooga.



## Boom and Bust

the hiss of escaping steam, and the sonorous blasts of the steamboat whistles" gave evidence of one phase. Another was furnished by the raftsmen, who "camped out in shanties on the rafts," and were likely, after "taking in the sights in the lower part of the city," including "all the saloons and 'barrel houses'" to spend the night at "Sergt. Hogan's metropolitan rendezvous."<sup>41</sup>

The river continued to be two rivers in fact, one below the rough water area, from Muscle Shoals to Paducah, and the other above, from Chattanooga to the upper reaches of the navigable section. With the completion of the Muscle Shoals canal, however, new life was given an old desire. The romance of the river was hard to kill. But the new Chattanooga Steamboat Company was not romantic; its purpose was a realistic one. Its direction was in the hands of Adolph Ochs and Newell Sanders. Sanders, an Indianian, came to Chattanooga in 1878, and at the suggestion of General Wilder began to manufacture plows from local pig iron in a small, ill-equipped shop. At the time, farmers of the area secured their plows from Northern manufacturers. Sanders showed inventive skill in designing a plow adapted particularly to Southern soils, and by 1894 was one of the community's most important industrialists.<sup>42</sup>

The company immediately purchased a steamboat, the *Herbert*, which was to voyage between Chattanooga and St. Louis, with the very practical intention of forcing a reduction of railroad rates. The history of the *Herbert* is a typical one. On December 12, 1891 the loaded steamer, pushing barges, also filled to capacity, left the Chattanooga wharf on its maiden trip. Near the entrance of the canal it struck a rock and sank, but it was quickly raised and proceeded on its way, only to strike another obstruction and to sink again. For the second time, it was floated, but when it reached Paducah ice in the Ohio River caused the abandonment of the voyage.

Great discouragement was a consequence of the series of mishaps. Blame for the sinkings was charged to the pilot or to the failure of the United States engineers to mark the channel adequately. Captain

<sup>41</sup> *ibid.*, Jan. 24, Feb. 10, 1894.

<sup>42</sup> *Chattanooga Commercial*, March 21, 1878; Rufus Terral, *Newell Sanders*, p. 33.

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George W. Goethals, U. S. engineer in charge of the river improvements and later to win fame for the construction of the Panama Canal, said the *Herbert* was too small for the job assigned to it. However, the little steamer made at least three successful trips before its owners decided to place its machinery in a new hull. The apparent success of the experiment in spite of the early trouble created much local enthusiasm. People were determined "to rally to the support of the Chattanooga Steamboat Company until the final victory of equal freight rates and privileges that are accorded to competing points are given to Chattanooga."<sup>43</sup>

The reconstructed boat, christened the *City of Chattanooga*, had an auspicious start, when it made a trip to St. Louis and back with four barges. But financial difficulties beset the company, largely because of its inability to collect stock pledges. The boat was consequently disposed of to a firm which promised to continue to assist in the effort to reduce rates generally. However the *Times*, with prophetic insight, proclaimed on hearing the news, "The game is up." Although some rates were reduced temporarily, the only permanent effect was a "reduction in the rate on sugar from New Orleans. . . ."<sup>44</sup>

The passing of the Chattanooga Steamboat Company was but a minor defeat compared with the consequences of the panic and the steel failure. Wherever Chattanooga turned they seemed stymied. Yet they refused to quit striving in their effort to build a new economic basis for their community. It is no wonder that those of that period who are still alive are puzzled that new generations have chosen to associate the adjective "gay" with the 1890's.

<sup>43</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, May 13, 1892.

<sup>44</sup> Terral, *op. cit.*, p. 54; *Chattanooga Times*, May 7, 1893.

## CHAPTER XVII

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### *New Hope*

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"I hope the time will come when I can take my wife and children and go to Chattanooga with you and go over the ground which your Army made historic. . . ." This expressed desire by a son of a Union veteran who had fought at Chickamauga and Chattanooga with the Army of the Cumberland in 1863 exemplified a general attitude. As one of the places where American history had been made the locality increasingly attracted tourists of all types, who wished also to see for themselves if the scenic surroundings were as unusual as they had been pictured.

Despite this interest there was no indication by marker or otherwise of where the battles had been fought or of the great series of movements in which the two armies had engaged. A visit by some ex-Federal officers to Chickamauga in the summer of 1888 brought sharply to them the need to preserve and to mark the area. As they were members of the Army of the Cumberland it was but natural that they should turn to the society formed of its veterans for assistance in the project.

The Society of the Army of the Cumberland had met for a reunion in Chattanooga in 1881. This was the first such reunion of Federal veterans held south of the Ohio River. When it was proposed that the meeting be held there, the idea was received with enthusiasm. As one prominent member of the Society said: ". . . it is a long time since we fought at Chickamauga. Let us go and see these places again. . . .



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I fear it will not be long before all traces of the old landmarks will have passed away.”<sup>1</sup>

Chattanoogaans were greatly excited by the news that the reunion was to be held in their city. The local committees, which were formed to take care of every phase of the meeting, contained both Federals and Confederates. The list reads like a roll call of the community's prominent citizens, without regard to previous affiliation. Confederates like Major Fort, Dr. Bachman, and Judge Key served with General Wilder, Captain Chamberlain, and Colonel MacGowan. Even the divided families were represented as the brothers Crutchfield took their places to promote the event. The young men, who had been but infants at the time of conflict, such as Adolph Ochs and Charles E. James, were also given their share of assignments.

However, the death of President James Garfield, who had been Rosecrans' chief of staff in the Chickamauga campaign, from an assassin's bullet, just a day before the reunion opened, caused a quick modification of all plans. In place of a celebration, the occasion turned into a requiem for the departed comrade. The most striking phase of the three-day meeting was the parade of the Blue and the Gray to the top of Cameron Hill. There, while the band played the “Star-Spangled Banner,” two veterans—one from the Union Army and the other from the Confederate—slowly raised to the top of the staff “a large flag draped in mourning.” Then as “Nearer My God to Thee” was played and the large assemblage bared its head, the flag was lowered to halfmast where it remained. All the bells of the city slowly tolled and cannon in the distance boomed. The Reverend Dr. Bachman presided at the ensuing meeting, in which addresses commemorating the martyred President by an ex-Confederate and ex-Unionist were delivered.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Society of the Army of the Cumberland, Twelfth Reunion, Toledo, Ohio, 1880*, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> *Society of the Army of the Cumberland, Thirteenth Reunion, Chattanooga, Tenn. 1881*, pp. 65-81.

In 1885, Chattanoogaans held appropriate memorial services for U. S. Grant. In characteristic fashion, veterans of both armies participated in memory of the man who had commanded the victorious Federal armies at Chattanooga. *Chattanooga Times*, July 26, 1885.

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At this meeting, old interests were reawakened, as thousands of veterans tramped peacefully over scenes which recalled vivid moments of their youth. However, they were all surprised to find how time had faded places and circumstances from memory. One observed that he had gone with a group to Chickamauga, of which every member "was calculating all the way out to go and show all the rest just where the lines were, and when we got there, there wasn't a man in the whole crowd that could tell a thing about it." General Rosecrans was not surprised that such was the case, for he said that even at the time commanders could not fix the position of their troops.<sup>3</sup>

Henry V. Boynton had been a regimental commander in the Army of the Cumberland at Chickamauga and Missionary Ridge, where he was wounded. He was one of the most prominent correspondents in Washington, representing a Cincinnati newspaper. He suggested in a series of published letters in 1888 that the battlefields about Chattanooga be preserved and marked. This idea was received with enthusiasm. A committee of the members of the Society of the Army of the Cumberland was appointed to inaugurate a movement to this end. They sought and received the assistance of some prominent ex-Confederates and together they planned the organization of the Joint Chickamauga Memorial Association.

The model of the plan originally was that of the Gettysburg Memorial Association which for some years had been acquiring land on that battlefield. However, an essential difference was included. Men of both armies were to participate in the Chickamauga project, and the lines and positions of both were to be ascertained and permanently marked.

In September, 1889, the Society of the Army of the Cumberland returned to Chattanooga for its annual reunion, and the matter which dominated the attention of all was the proposed park. The United Confederate Veterans had formally organized the preceding summer but was as yet in only an embryo stage. Consequently, invitations were sent to the various local Confederate groups to send representa-

<sup>3</sup> *Society of the Army of the Cumberland, Nineteenth Reunion, Chicago, Illinois, 1888*, pp. 52-54.

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tives to meet with the Unionists and to give their support to the idea. Ochs, who was chairman of the local Chickamauga Memorial Association Committee, presided at the preliminary joint meeting of veterans.

This session, held September 19, 1889, was in a large tent, decorated with flags and streamers. Gathered "were the soldiers of the Blue and Gray . . . the brave men who fought beneath and Stars and Stripes and those who battled under the Stars and Bars. There they were seated together side by side, all intent on one great purpose, and the heart of each one swelling with love and good feeling for the other—all blessing the day that had bound together the North and the South, and finally welded the hearts of the Blue and Gray. Everyone was earnest and every heart seemed to be fully in the matter. It was truly a moment and an assemblage that could cry aloud:

'Blot out the lines that would divide  
And desecrate our sod!'"<sup>4</sup>

On the following day a meeting was held on the battlefield and a permanent organization effected. John T. Wilder was chosen president and John B. Gordon, then governor of Georgia, delivered the principal address. In 1861, Gordon had raised the Raccoon Roughs in Dade County, just out of Chattanooga, and made such a remarkable record as a commander that he was a lieutenant general at the close of the war. At the adjournment of the meeting, all gathered for a feast at a tremendous barbecue, at which it was said 104 hogs, 195 sheep, 122 goats, 7 beeves, and 12,000 loaves of bread were served. To end the festivities, 14,000 pipes made from wood collected on the field and 85 pounds of Durham tobacco were distributed, "to be used for smoking the pipe of peace."<sup>5</sup>

A charter for the Chickamauga Memorial Association was secured on December 4, 1889, from the state of Georgia, in which the whole of the battlefield lies. The enthusiasm which the project generated and its aspects of a national shrine caused its promoters to request

<sup>4</sup> *Society of the Army of the Cumberland, Twentieth Reunion, Chattanooga, Tennessee*, 1889, pp. 109-110.

<sup>5</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, September 21, 1889.



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that Congress undertake it with public funds. At the same time, the scope of the memorial park was enlarged to include all the battles of the immediate area of Chattanooga. No opposition developed to these suggestions, and on August 18, 1890, President Harrison signed the act establishing the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park, the first in the history of the country.<sup>6</sup>

The park was to include the ten square miles of the Chickamauga battlefield and small detached areas which were important in the Chattanooga campaign, the principal ones being Bragg's headquarters, Orchard Knob, and a portion of Missionary Ridge near where Sherman attacked. The states of Georgia and Tennessee ceded to the Federal Government the roads connecting the various sections of the park. One of these ran along the crest of Missionary Ridge and another from Lookout Mountain to Rossville, from which point two roads led to Chickamauga. The commission appointed to administer the area was especially emphatic about one thing: "The park is not in any sense a pleasure ground, and no work of beautifying is in progress or contemplated. The central idea is the restoration of these battlefields to the conditions which existed at the time of the engagements."<sup>7</sup>

Preliminary plans to mark the lines were already under way. The Forrest Camp, a Chattanooga area group of Confederates, organized in September, 1886, worked with the Federals to unravel the complex problem. Governor Gordon, who had been chosen the first commander of the United Confederate Veterans upon its organization the preceding summer, appointed Chattanooga as its first meeting place. It was hoped that the presence of additional participants in the battle would assist in discovering exact positions of the troops.<sup>8</sup>

Unionists residing in Chattanooga welcomed the opportunity to

<sup>6</sup> H. V. Boynton, *The National Military Park Chickamauga-Chattanooga*, pp. 251-274; H. V. Boynton, Compiler: *Dedication of the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park*, September 18-20, 1895, p. 71.

<sup>7</sup> Boynton, compiler, *Dedication of the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park*, September 18-20, 1895. pp. 15-16.

<sup>8</sup> Even with all the effort to mark the field accurately, arguments were to continue, as long as veterans were alive to make them, about the locations. Archibald Gracie's *The Truth about Chickamauga* points out some of the errors in the way the field was marked.

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display their interest in a meeting of their onetime enemies. All local arrangements included their assistance, and as the veterans gathered on July 3, Chattanooga as a unit turned out for a colorful celebration. The speeches and parades, typical of all such gatherings, were overshadowed by the "glorious display of fireworks" on the night of the 4th. The crowd gathered on the crest of Cameron Hill and along the river to watch the "salvos of aerial maroon, prismatic fountains, Gatling batteries of colored bullets; water fireworks, consisting of flying fishes, diving devils, fountains and water witches, mines of feu de joie, and calliopes; fiery whirlwinds, weeping willows, mines of hornets, wasps, bugs and devils, with showers of jewels," all of which were fired from barges anchored in the river.<sup>9</sup>

As the time approached for the dedication of the National Military Park, interest locally was heightened by many news items about the project. Everyone realized that the crowd which would attend this celebration would dwarf even the large numbers which had come to reunions. The town had fallen upon hard times after 1893; here was a new hope. When it was announced that the 32nd anniversary of the Battle of Chickamauga in September, 1895, had been chosen as the time of dedication, an editorial summarized its possibilities for the town.

"The coming dedication," said the editor of the *Times*, "is something that directly and very seriously concerns every citizen of Chattanooga. It is the first of a long series of public affairs, that will take shape here, provided that, as to this one, Chattanooga shows she can handle a great crowd deftly, satisfactorily; also, to do our best we must present the town in an attractive garb. According as we show we are worthy will we be benefited by the attraction of the Park. On this a round million has been spent, by the government and the states. Another million will be expended soon, and we can secure further expenditures more promptly by showing ourselves worthy custodians of the splendid object the Park already is."<sup>10</sup>

The people were advised to clean up their premises, so that the city would make a good impression. Residents of the surrounding

<sup>9</sup> *First Annual Convention United Confederate Veterans, Chattanooga, Tennessee*, 1890, p. 33.

<sup>10</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, August 28, 1895.

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towns and countryside were told of their opportunity. "Bring on the wagons," they were advised. "Every owner of a horse and vehicle in Hamilton, James, Marion, Bradley [counties] in Tennessee, and in Walker, Catoosa and Dade counties in Georgia," should have their rigs at hand for the dedication. "If they have not spring seats let them use chairs. If they have not swell harness let them fix up the old." They were enjoined to "make good money and see the greatest dedication in the history of the world."<sup>11</sup>

When the great days arrived, the town was overwhelmed by the throngs which came from all corners of the nation. Interested observers, Federal and state officials, as well as the veterans themselves, crowded all regularly scheduled trains, while more than seventy specials arrived and parked in the railroad yards, where many of them furnished sleeping quarters for passengers. Tent cities were erected and barracks arranged to house visitors. The hotels were crowded to capacity and citizens opened their homes to care for guests. No one was allowed to feel himself a stranger. The committee on entertainment announced that it had cots galore and all residents were invited to borrow any number. Regular eating places were supplemented by temporarily erected booths and tents. Portable ice-water fountains were placed for the convenience of those attending the ceremonies.

The exercise opened with the dedication of state monuments on September 18, and on that evening the Society of the Army of the Cumberland, proud of the part it had played in the creation of the park, held its reunion. The major event was the dedication of the Chickamauga portion of the park the next day in the natural amphitheater at the foot of Snodgrass hill, the scene of such bloody fighting in the battle. On that morning all was hustle and bustle in the town, as "the hegira to the park began." Crowds gathered at the railroad station to go out by train, while others, in a throng which recalled to those who had experienced it the great retreat after the battle, used all varieties of transportation to reach the field. "Landaus drawn by 'spanking' teams, containing perhaps a state Governor, mingled with the country carts. Horsemen by the score darted

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*, August 4, 1895.



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past and every few minutes a tally-ho with gay parties rumbled past. . . . From every approach, vehicles, wheelmen and . . . pedestrians poured into the park. . . ."<sup>12</sup>

The next day, the Chattanooga portion of the park was dedicated. In every phase of these exercises, the orators were pre-eminent, and in virtually every speech there was exhaustive detailing of the participation in the battle by the organizations with which the speaker was associated. This praise of the valor of comrades was seriously meant, but no less earnest were the tributes to harmony and unity, qualities which had been evidenced in the creation of the park and for which it stood as an emblem. Every issue of the newspapers was filled with discussion of various phases of the fighting, and the arguments touched off by them continued for many weeks.

Two prominent battle sites were not included in the park. One was the summit of Cameron Hill, which later was made a city park and named for Henry V. Boynton in recognition of his services to the community. The other and more spectacular was Lookout Mountain Point and Cravens' Terrace immediately below it. The Point, associated erroneously with the war as the scene of the "Battle above the Clouds," would have been a most important addition. Because of its dominant position the tourist could view the roads by which the movements of troops occurred as though they were laid out on a map before him. However, it had for years been the center of a strange conflict of its own. It was owned privately and jealously guarded for commercial purposes.

Before the war, Colonel James A. Whiteside and associates had constructed a toll road up Lookout Mountain, which served the needs until 1879. Then another, on which no toll was charged, was built. This precipitated what is locally called the "turnpike war." The owners of the first road also held the property at Lookout Point. A fence was erected to enclose it, and an admission charge exacted of all who came up the free road. But as the controversy grew, new restrictions were placed upon those who wished to visit the scenic and historic spot. The carriage in which they rode to the mountain had to be hired from a Chattanooga livery stable, to which a monop-

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*, September 20, 1895.

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oly had been granted. This firm, in return, used only the old road and paid the tolls required. Then an admission fee was charged for entry to the Point. No other visitor could gain entrance, and "shotgun patrol" enforced the regulations. These circumstances led to several lawsuits, which finally resulted in a court order opening the park to anyone who offered the proper admission fee. However, the owner of the property, resentful of "management by courts," closed the area to everyone.<sup>13</sup>

During the good years of the 1880's, a new element was brought into this controversy, when a company was formed which bought a considerable area just below the Point. They constructed a large hotel with balconies extending around three sides. From these, guests could enjoy the full panoramic view afforded by the Point from the comfort of easy chairs or during stolen moments between dances. An incline railroad was built from St. Elmo, the suburb at the foot of the mountains to the hotel. To connect this new means of transportation with the top of Lookout, a narrow gauge railroad was built.<sup>14</sup>

As the dedication of the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park drew near, the owners of the Point, hoping to realize on the additional tourist business, undertook the creation of an incline, which ran directly to the top of the mountain, rising about 1,500 feet in less than a mile. As it ascended the precipitous brow of the mountain, it afforded its passengers a striking view of the surrounding countryside.<sup>15</sup> When it was placed in operation in November, 1895, a new phase of the old warfare was introduced. The owners of the Point allowed only its passengers entrance to the area. A new crop of litigations was a consequence, but the townspeople felt a greater interest in the matter because of the increasing importance of tourists to the economic status of the city.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, April 12, 24, 27, May 14, June 22, 24, 29, 1879; June 13, 14, 20, 22, 1885; September 18, 1938. The last issue contains a historical account by Robert Sparks Walker.

<sup>14</sup> The first car up this incline ran December 10, 1886, although it did not carry passengers until March of the next year. A broad gauge railroad was begun in 1885 but was not completed until early in 1889.

<sup>15</sup> This incline No. 2, as it was called at the time of construction, is the one which operates today.

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The two men who took the lead in the effort to solve this long-standing difficulty were Adolph Ochs and Alexander W. Chambliss.<sup>16</sup> They received, naturally, the support of virtually all Chattanoogaans when they suggested that the Federal Government buy the Point and the terrace below and make them a part of the National Military Park. When on October 21, 1898, it was announced that the transactions had been completed, the *Times* exultantly proclaimed that the warfare was over and that the area would "be open to all visitors and will remain so."<sup>17</sup>

The park brought a constant flow of visitors to Chattanooga. When they arrived in large groups for such affairs as reunions and the dedication, the townspeople worked hard to prove themselves good hosts. They took part in the social affairs with particular delight. Everyday life in the small town was not very exciting: ". . . the favorite pastime for summer afternoons was to dress up in one's frilliest organdy dress and large beflowered leghorn hat, or in a stiff starched shirt waist and skirt, with a sailor hat atop one's pompa-

<sup>16</sup> Chambliss was a South Carolinian who came to Chattanooga as a young man. A lawyer, he played an important part in local politics and history. He served several terms as mayor of the city and at his death was Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Tennessee.

<sup>17</sup> Two years before this date, Ochs had completed the purchase of *The New York Times* and had removed his residence to that city. But his interest in Chattanooga never died. He retained ownership of the local paper and repeatedly took an active part in civic matters. Constantly he remarked that the heights which surrounded the town, in particular, Lookout Mountain, offered opportunities which the community hardly realized. He feared that the natural beauty of the mountainside would be destroyed if it were not protected. In the 1920's, Ochs, himself, took the initiative and with associates purchased approximately 2,700 acres on the east and west slopes of the mountain. He lent the county \$150,000, with which to rebuild the road constructed in 1879. The whole area was given to the Federal Government on June 22, 1934, for inclusion in the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park.

In recognition of his untiring efforts, a memorial to Ochs, an observatory museum, was erected at Lookout Mountain Point and dedicated in 1940. It is a fitting location, as it stands in an area which Ochs worked steadfastly to "preserve for posterity," and overlooks the community where he made his start in life and for which he held constant affection. G. W. Johnson, *An Honorable Titan*, pp. 283-287.

Enabling legislation to include Moccasin Bend in the Park system was signed by President Truman on August 4, 1950.



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dour and go down town where one paraded with one's best girl friends until some one or two or three of the village swains attached themselves for the walk home. . . ." But visitors meant formal affairs at the hotels and dinner parties in the homes. The gowns of the ladies created interest in new fashions, while the conversations of the men were filled with references to personalities and events in more cosmopolitan areas.

Social amenities were a prominent part of the community's life at all times. There was a great variety of clubs; in fact, some believed them to be a hindrance to anything of real value. One commentator noted, the "club fever has become to society in general a perfect affliction." Such critics were far more interested in more cultural affairs. When Sarah Bernhardt, for example, came to town, they were possibly more pleased. Although the audience was small, a newspaper writer thought the event most satisfactory. "It came high," he wrote, "but we have seen her."

Larger groups welcomed with enthusiastic appreciation the appearances of Al. G. Fields's Mammoth Minstrels and Sousa's band. Booth and Barrett, the Drews, and the Templeton family with their small daughter Fay, were among the number of stars who shared the boards at the opera house. Not all the performances were received with approbation. Lily Langtry, for example, was offended by local criticism, and retorted that Chattanooga was a "nasty little village." The theater, however, offered a constant source of interest and formed a contact between the community and the greater world which lay outside.

Stimulation also came from lectures and concerts. Local authorities spoke on their specialities, and recitals of all kinds displayed the talents of the townfolk. Among the notable visiting musical performers were Nordica, Modjeska and Scharwenka, the pianist, while Bancroft, the historian, Stanley, the African explorer, Watterson, the onetime editor of the *Chattanooga Rebel*, and Debs, the Socialist leader, were some of the prominent lecturers.

Like all American readers, Chattanoogaans were turning to an interest in the historical romance and local bookdealers did a thriving business in the books of such authors as Mary Johnston, Charles Major, and Gilbert Parker. At the same time, they followed the

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fortunes of Trilby and Svengali, and laughed at the shrewd David Harum. Earlier, interest had been divided between English and American writers; Scott still had his adherents, some of whom bragged that they read him complete every year; Dickens and Thackeray were bought in massive sets by those who could afford them; Mark Twain was occasionally frowned upon but offered good fare to readers who themselves bore some aspects of the pioneer. Southern writers began to attract attention, among them Joel Chandler Harris, George W. Cable, Thomas Nelson Page, and "George Egbert Craddock," whom residents of the town with other Tennesseans were delighted to discover was none other than a native of the state, Mary Noailles Murfree. And as the century turned, Chattanoogaans saw with pride the appearance of books by their own neighbors, Grace and Alice MacGowan, the daughters of the editor of the *Times*. For the most part, readers of Chattanooga were no different from their fellows over the continent. Though best-seller lists had just begun to make their appearance, there was nevertheless a concentration of attention nationally on the same writers and the same books. The same was true of periodicals, the most popular of which were preserved in bound volumes and kept in the family library.

The mores of the citizens were steadily guarded by a latent puritanical attitude, as demonstrated in the social codes which guided the conduct of young ladies and the growing debate over the "masculine girl." Sumptuary legislation to protect the morals was often discussed and occasionally enacted. When this happened, the liberal *Times* immediately came to the defense of moderation: "The *Times* has always advocated reasonable and vigorous enforcement of the law; and we have also been always opposed to blue-law methods, the seeking to reform men by statute. Punish crime. Protect property; maintain order; but the eternal meddling in the people's affairs, the constant magnifying of petty vices or errors into high crimes not only fails of the object paternalists have in view, but makes conditions worse."<sup>18</sup> The editor was consequently not surprised when, after the passage of an anticigarette act in Ten-

<sup>18</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, December 7, 1897.

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nessee, a reporter found that the "old cigarette fiend" had either learned to roll his own "dope sticks" or discovered a place in Chatanooga where he could illicitly purchase a package of "Duke's."

Cigarette smoking, whisky drinking, divorce, and a multitude of similar evils were the subjects of attacks by visiting evangelists. When the Reverends Sam Jones and George R. Stuart came to town they drew crowds which were equaled only by those that gathered for important political campaign speeches. The exhortations of the speakers drew a fervent response from their hearers. Of a somewhat similar nature were the old-fashioned baptisms which were frequently held in the river at the foot of Market Street. Singing, weeping, and shouting, the baptized were so rapt in their attention to the service that they were oblivious to the throng which viewed the ceremony from bank, bridge, and barge. The majority of the citizens, however, attended the church of their choice and reflected their faith in simple, quiet devotions.

Much of the social life of the small town was given to wagon and hiking parties, boat rides and picnics. The usual recreational sports were supported by enthusiastic participants, although a change was gradually taking place, as professional groups began playing before spectators who preferred to watch rather than to take part themselves. Walking contests were the rage in the eighties, but gave way to bicycle races when the era of the wheelmen arrived. Painted in striking colors and carefully attended to, the bicycles offered both a means of practical transportation and pleasure. By the end of the century, the more daring became interested in the automobile, and efforts to have an exhibition by the Horseless Wagon Racing Association were made in the fall of 1897.

Baseball continued to be the big summer sport, and local clubs crossed bats with those from neighboring communities. When a touring girls' team from Philadelphia played one of these amateur groups, the spectators were more concerned with their costumes and antics than with the score. "The young ladies wore Dolly Varden dresses," it was reported, "which came just below the knees, and bright colored hose. The suits were made of red flannel, striped with black; a red silk cap, worn jauntily on the side, completed their costume, the tout ensemble being extremely unique, and the effect



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very pleasing. The girls . . . would extend their hands in baby fashion when a ball came within reach and invariably muff it. Their throw was a puzzle; they would toss the balls in that awkward style common with girls and wrench and bend their bodies as if it were going half a mile. . . . The pitcher, a petite blond, sent in her balls pretty hot, and when they were tapped, such a scrambling and fumbling was never seen." These young ladies were paid for their appearance, even though their performance could hardly be called a professional one. However, professionals made their debut as early as 1889, when a Southern League operated for a while.

The nineties saw the introduction of football, and colorful buggy and landau parties gathered to see the new sport. Teams from the University of the South, the University of Tennessee, Grant Memorial University and the town athletic association were favorites, for whom the "fair sex let out many little shrieks of terror or applause."

Military organizations before the passage of the National Guard act by the state legislature in 1888 were more social in intention than anything else. Occasionally the members were among the participants in knightly tournaments where the contestants jousted in friendly rivalry. However, no definite terms of enlistment were required of members, who entered or resigned at will, and training for anything approximating the conditions of combat were negligible at best. After the enactment of the new law, three companies—the Lookout Mountain Guards, the Chattanooga Rifles, and the White-side Rifles—were mustered in, and keen competitive drilling contests were frequently held. This was poor training, however, for the call which came for service in the field.

In 1898 the Chattanooga militiamen, with the rest of the country, were confronted by the serious circumstance of actual warfare. The order for them to move to Nashville for organization for service in the Spanish-American War was received as they were preparing to participate in the first of the annual spring festivals. Its principal attractions were the parade of gaily decorated floats, which displayed the king and queen and their court, chosen from the younger social leaders of the area, and the dance which closed the festivities.

In order to carry out their instructions and at the same time to perform their part in the gay occasion at home the men in uniform

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were placed at the end of the long procession and furnished an unlooked-for climax when they moved without stopping, from the spot the parade dispersed, to the station. There they marched on the waiting cars, and the train was immediately surrounded by the cheering crowd which packed the depot. The first Chattanooga contingent to leave for the war thus received an enthusiastic holiday farewell.

On May 3, when the local militia left for Nashville, Chattanooga had grown accustomed to the appearance again of uniforms on its streets. Although the *Times*,<sup>19</sup> in contradistinction to the yellow journalism of the time, had conservatively cautioned against hot-headed seekers of Spanish blood, the townspeople, typical of all Americans, had grown constantly more belligerent, as new stories following those about the sinking of the *Maine* accented the apparent necessity for action. When the national military authorities, seeking a place of concentration for the widely scattered regular troops, where they could be "fully equipped, drilled, disciplined . . . and prepared for war service," decided upon Chickamauga in early April, the town's interest grew. A regiment of infantry, the vanguard of a body which was to consist "of practically the military force of the government," arrived April 15.<sup>20</sup>

The regulars assisted in the preparation of the camp for the volunteers and state militia who were to follow them. Wells were bored, railroad sidings completed, and a minimum amount of building construction undertaken. This activity brought new life to Chattanooga. Newspaper correspondents and men looking for work crowded the hotels, boardinghouses, and streets. Great throngs of curious sight-seers came from the surrounding towns and countryside to watch the arrival of the troops. Traveling salesmen descended on the local merchants to persuade them to increase their stocks. The preparation for war thus removed the last signs of the long depression from Chattanooga.

Major General J. R. Brooke of the regular army arrived with his

<sup>19</sup> As the *Times* is the only available newspaper for this period, it has been used to secure the local detail for the Spanish-American War.

<sup>20</sup> The regular army numbered only 28,000 men, most of whom had been garrisoned in western frontier posts. Few of the officers, except those who had been in the Civil War, had commanded more than a company.

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staff on April 20 to take command of Camp George H. Thomas, named in honor of the "Rock of Chickamauga." Five days later war was declared. Volunteers and state militia began to add their numbers to the regular army regiments, which shortly started to move to ports of embarkation. Some of the officers were veterans of the Civil War, among them participants in the battle at Chickamauga. It was not unusual for them to reminisce about their experiences as "Yank" or "Johnny Reb" to the delight and edification of their new comrades.<sup>21</sup>

By the end of May, 45,000 men were in camp at Chickamauga, although troops had been departing as well as arriving in the interim. When representatives of the War Department arrived for an inspection of the facilities and troops, they were appalled by what they found. Shortages of every kind existed. Men drilled without rifles or uniforms, and many lacked even shoes and stockings. Bathing facilities were inadequate. The volunteer and militia regiments, more frequently than not, had men designated as cooks whose experience was insufficient to feed so many hungry men properly. Some units depended upon hard-tack inasmuch as the camp bakery was still in the process of preparation and they, themselves, had no bakers among their personnel.

There was an alarming shortage of medicines and other hospital supplies, and the officers, as inexperienced as the men, knew nothing of the sanitation and care which are necessary to keep men healthy when gathered in such great numbers. Little screening of the enlisted ranks had been attempted to discover men of previous experience, and as in all early American wars, individuals who knew politicians received commissions even though they did not know the manual of arms and were incapable of leading troops. One regiment at Camp Thomas had among its private soldiers a West Point graduate who had resigned from the Army after reaching the rank of captain. When his transfer was requested in order to give him the

<sup>21</sup> Among these were three generals, all of whom had held that rank in the Civil War. James H. Wilson was a Union commander, while Fitzhugh Lee and Joseph Wheeler (Fighting Joe) were in the Confederate forces. Wheeler took part in the battles around Chattanooga including Chickamauga. When he reached the training area and watched the cavalry drilling, he exclaimed, "This reminds me of old times. I am glad to be here again."



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rank to which his previous training entitled him, his regimental commander refused, explaining that he was needed to give the officers instruction. An Executive Order from the White House was required before the transfer was accomplished.<sup>22</sup>

Yet preparations went on apace; sham battles were fought and reviews held, both of which attracted large crowds of spectators from the neighborhood. The informality of the camp was displayed in many ways. Merchants from Chattanooga outfitted wagons which made daily trips to dispense their wares. Very shortly, several erected branch stores, with the permission of the camp commander, to play the role of sutlers. Independent peddlers of every description and local farmers, who hawked their produce along the streets of tents, created a problem for the troops' officers. Without regard to health precautions or regulation of any sort, they brought foodstuffs and drinks, which the men consumed to the extent of their capacity. There was frequent trouble between buyer and seller, as both bargained for the advantage. Some of the troops could not resist the temptation to steal as the merchant was busy with paying customers. One ingenious farmer instructed his driver that "when he said to drive on 'To drive on.'" When a crowd gathered around his wagon loaded with watermelons and he saw a man attempting to make off with one of them, he gave the driver the signal. As the wagon lurched away "a tugging match ensued during which the melon was dropped. By a special effort the soldier fought free, but he left as a souvenir two handfuls of hair, which the farmer took home [and] tied up with blue ribbons. . . ." <sup>23</sup>

Many of the soldiers felt that being in the Army entitled them to carry arms of any description. This led to frequent difficulties with the Chattanooga police who attempted to enforce the law against concealed weapons. Their principal offense, however, was the typical one of drunkenness, and soldiers in the city gangs working on the streets were not an uncommon sight. The men were hard-pressed for recreation. None of the modern special service organizations of the Army existed, although such volunteer groups as the YMCA, the

<sup>22</sup> Walter Millis, *The Martial Spirit*, pp. 215-216.

<sup>23</sup> *Chattanooga News*, April 9, 1930. Recollections of J. Livingstone White.

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Christian Endeavor, the Red Cross, and the National Relief Commission carried on limited activities. Except for a theater, which was crowded at every performance, the only opportunities for diversion afforded by the camp were swimming in Chickamauga Creek and hiking, which was little fun after a day of drill. One result was the springing up at the little community of Lytle, just across the railroad tracks from the western border of the park, of a mushroom growth of heterogeneous shacks. "Poolrooms of the baser sort, blind tigers, and practically all of the parasites tending to infest military encampments, had practically undisturbed play, even on Sundays."<sup>24</sup> Along with these were a number of eating houses, stores where uniforms and other necessary supplies could be secured, and even a guide to information about "historical Lookout Mountain." Lytle furnished constant difficulty to the military authorities and aroused the indignation of the Pastors' Association of Chattanooga. Both importuned the governor of Georgia to take steps to control the situation, and at times the commandant of the camp declared Lytle out of bounds. But it continued for the period of the camp to give the majority of the troops, to whom visits to Chattanooga were allowed at infrequent intervals, their principal source of contact with civilian life.

Local women's organizations of all types did what they could to alleviate the boredom of the troops. For the officers this took the form at times of dances and parties, but for the men in general it consisted largely of religious services or care in the hospitals. As the summer wore on, sickness presented a crucial problem. From the time the park was chosen as a concentration point, rival communities had insisted upon its inadequacy. The reports of increasing illness at Camp Thomas caused an intensification of their criticism. This brought Chattanoogaans to the defense of the campsite. But even they could not deny the serious spread of typhoid fever which began to be noted early in July.

Military authorities had instituted precautionary measures of a limited nature a month before. Hucksters were forbidden to sell "light drinks and 'knick-knacks,'" and officers were ordered to improve the sanitary conditions of their camps. Later, they were instructed to boil the drinking water which came from wells and springs. Some of

<sup>24</sup> Wiltse Manuscript, p. 494.

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the men obviously were using bottled waters, and warning advertisements appeared in the Chattanooga papers cautioning all "against spurious waters served out of refilled Apollinaris bottles. . . ." However, such slight preventive efforts had little or no effect. Frightening rumors spread throughout the country. Some went so far as to declare that the illness was yellow fever, a charge which was violently denied by local sources.

The inadequate hospitals were soon filled. Doctors and nurses at hand could not cope with the situation, and such necessary commodities as milk and ice were woefully lacking. The Army recruited medical personnel and hurried them to Chickamauga, where new hospital buildings were quickly erected. Private individuals within Chattanooga and without attempted to assist in every way they could. One philanthropic person bought a resort hotel nearby and gave it to the Army for use as a hospital. Residents, at the solicitation of far-off friends, whose sons were ill, sought them out and carried them to their homes to nurse them through sickness and convalescence. Lawn fetes were held to secure funds for the purchase of milk and ice which were distributed among the hospitals. And all the while the controversy raged as to where the responsibility actually lay.

The editor of the *Times* recalling his own long experience of four years in the field with troops insisted that the whole miserable situation was due to "looseness in respect of proper sanitation and abominably bad medical administration." A large amount of the illness, in his opinion, was the result of "inadequate preparation for disposing of the garbage, night soil, and the general refuse of the camp." He pointed out that the health conditions within the community, itself, were normal, and denied vigorously that either the water or the park itself was unhealthy. Army inspectors reported that though every precaution was then being taken, it was too late. "The mischief has been done," one stated. "This park as a camping place is incurably infected. Every breeze carries a stench. . . . The cases of typhoid fever have reached five hundred and the whole situation presages a general epidemic."<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Millis, *op. cit.* p. 366.



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On August 12, the war came to a close. The men at Camp Thomas saw no reason to continue their training. Peace heightened their impatience with military life and their fear of illness. Letters expressing their discontent were sent both by individuals and groups to newspapers and to Government officials. The Army's Inspector General described the men as "morbid," and authorities at Chickamauga even attempted to persuade President McKinley to make a visit in an effort to improve morale.

The first regiment to leave for discharge entrained August 20, and by mid-September it was reported that the "great army of Chickamauga has passed into history," although a few troops still remained to attend to the dismantling of the camp. The *Times* stated that 72,000 men had been at Camp Thomas in the approximate five months of its operation. Of them, 425 had died of illness, while hundreds suffered from a variety of fevers and recovered. By contrast, only 379 men were killed in action or died of wounds in the war.<sup>26</sup>

The dead and ill at Camp Thomas were martyrs not to the location, as so many of that day and some modern commentators have claimed, but to the lack of preparation and the haste of organization. The experience of two wars since that date in which equally large bodies of troops were gathered at Chickamauga, but under modern sanitary methods, has demonstrated that the failure of 1898 was that of men. In fact, the epidemic at Camp Thomas, which was the major training ground for Spanish American War troops, was common to every camp of the day.

The influence of the Spanish-American War upon Chattanooga was less obvious than that which was a consequence of the longer conflict of 1861-1865. As the nineteenth century closed, the community was well established. Nevertheless, the effect of the war was not negligible. The doldrums which business had suffered after the failure of the steel experiments and the distress of the panic were alleviated to a large degree. Bank deposits and business activity increased as the men at Camp Thomas spent freely the money they received in monthly payrolls. Consequently, the news that Secretary of War Alger had recommended that a site near the Chickamauga

<sup>26</sup> *ibid.*, p. 367.

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Park would make an ideal spot for a permanent military post was received with enthusiasm. The construction of the necessary facilities was started in 1902, when the idea received official approval, and in December, 1904, the post was designated Fort Oglethorpe, in honor of the founder of the state of Georgia.

The town was still a relatively small one. The census of 1900 showed a population of 30,154, but the tourist business and the growth in the number of small plants, whose products reflected an increasing interest in diversified industry, were promising. None of these was to have a more important influence than a venture launched by a returning Spanish-American War veteran. On November 12, 1899, the *Times* carried a detailed account of the industries active in the community. In addition to listing the recent developments among the old-established firms, the account included an encouraging number of new companies and described their products. Interestingly enough, in a column adjacent to this material, a small, one-inch advertisement appeared, sponsored by an organization not included in the list. It unpretentiously recommended: "Drink a bottle of Coca-Cola 5c. at all stands, grocers and saloons."<sup>27</sup>

Ben F. Thomas had been a young lawyer before the outbreak of war in 1898. As with most of his fellows, his legal practice offered little opportunity for wealth, but he dreamed large dreams. Repeatedly he was heard to say that if he could only find some small, cheap commodity, which would have an immediate and permanent appeal for the general public, his fortune would be made. In his war experiences in Cuba, he noted the use of bottled drinks, which were consumed to an extent he had never seen before. Here was the thing he sought: the package was convenient, the price was low, and the demand obvious.

Though carbonated drinks were sold in the old pop-bottle, at the time, for the most part they were made of syrups concocted in the bottler's own plant. They were not specialty beverages with trade-marked names. Thomas realized that it was necessary to secure a product with an easily identified and remembered name to achieve his purpose.

<sup>27</sup> So far as is known this advertisement is the first evidence that Coca-Cola had been placed on the market in bottles.

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The soda fountain of the time was a popular gathering place for mixed crowds. Some specialty drinks had been developed and were dispensed over the counters. One of these was Coca-Cola, which had been originated by John S. Pemberton, a manufacturing pharmacist of Atlanta in 1886. Only twenty-five gallons of the syrup, which was mixed in the proportion of approximately one ounce to a drink, was sold the first year. It was not used, apparently, as a drink alone, as Pemberton advertised that it was "a brain tonic and intellectual beverage." The sales increased to 1,000 gallons the next year, but Pemberton's ill-health caused him to dispose of the formula. Following that, there were several other exchanges, but by April, 1891, Asa G. Candler of Atlanta was the sole owner.<sup>28</sup>

Candler was an energetic businessman and went to work to advertise and to popularize the drink, using large signs and novelties of every description to make the trade-mark of Coca-Cola well-known in the South.<sup>29</sup> He also claimed medicinal values for the drink for a short time as some of his early advertising reads that it "Cures Headaches. Renews the exhausted brain and body caused by

<sup>28</sup> *The Coca-Cola Company: Opinions, Order, Injunctions and Decrees Relating to Unfair Competition and Infringement of Trade-Mark.* p. 636.

The following is the complete chain of title to the ownership of Coca-Cola, as it appears in the above volume:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Owner</i>
May, 1886	J. S. Pemberton
July 8, 1887	J. S. Pemberton, W. E. Venable, George S. Lowndes
December 14, 1887	J. S. Pemberton, Woolfolk Walker, Mrs. M. C. Dozier
April 14, 1888	Walker, Candler and Company, Woolfolk Walker, Mrs. M. C. Dozier
April 17, 1888	Walker, Candler and Company, Asa G. Candler
April 22, 1891	Asa G. Candler
February 22, 1892	The Coca-Cola Company

September 12, 1919, the Candler interests disposed of the company to a corporation composed of thousands of stockholders.

<sup>29</sup> Pemberton had chosen Coca-Cola as a name because derivatives of coca leaves and the cola nut are used in its manufacture. The trade-mark in easy flowing script was the product of Pemberton's bookkeeper, F. M. Robinson. Candler chose red as the Coca-Cola color, and every keg and barrel, most of them in the early days secondhand whisky containers, in which the syrup was shipped, was painted that color, as they continue to be.



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excessive mental and physical labor, loss of sleep, etc." By 1896, his publicity campaign was costing \$80,000 a year.

When Thomas put away his soldier's uniform, Coca-Cola was a favorite beverage at Chattanooga's soda fountains. It offered all the advantages Thomas sought. It was growing rapidly in popularity. It had a distinctive trade name, which was widely recognized. A great rural market would be available if the proper merchandising method could be found. It was obvious to Thomas that, if the right to bottle Coca-Cola could be secured, it would be better than to attempt to establish a new formula.<sup>30</sup> He talked over the idea with friends in Chattanooga, and found one, another young lawyer, Joseph B. Whitehead, who was interested. The two discovered they had a common friend who was a relative of Candler. They persuaded him to accompany them to Atlanta to make the proper introduction. They explained the purpose of their visit to the head of the Coca-Cola Company, but Mr. Candler received it with little enthusiasm. He later recalled the meeting this way:

. . . two gentlemen came into our office on Edgewood Avenue for the purpose of negotiating with me about . . . the plausibility and the right to bottle Coca-Cola. I said: "Gentlemen, I don't think we want to have it bottled; we cannot handle it ourselves; there is too much detail about the bottling business and we are about as busy as we can be advertising the simple word 'Coca-Cola' . . . and I don't think you can make anything out of it. . . . We have neither the money, nor the time, to embark in the bottling business, and there are too many folks who are not responsible who care nothing about the reputation of what they put up, and I am afraid the name will be injured."

They stated . . . : "We promise and guarantee to you, Mr. Candler, that in all the business we do in the bottling business, we will make the name better every day we conduct this business. . . ."<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Coca-Cola had been bottled as early as 1893, but no concerted effort had been made to develop the trade. C. H. Candler, *Asa Griggs Candler*, pp. 174-175.

<sup>31</sup> *The Coca-Cola Company vs. Coca-Cola Bottling Company: Appeal from District Court of the United States for the District of Delaware Reply Brief for Complainant-Appealer in the United States Court of Appeals for the Third District*, No. 2651, pp. 4-5.

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The sincerity and enthusiasm of Thomas and Whitehead, however, caused Candler to grant them the privilege they requested, and on July 21, 1899, a contract was signed. Under it, Thomas and Whitehead received the exclusive right to bottle Coca-Cola in the territory of the United States with but a few limited exceptions. The syrup was to be secured at a price agreed upon from the Coca-Cola Company. Candler made no charge for the bottling rights.

Jubilant with their success, the two Chattanoogaans sought among their close associates others to join in the plan, which they believed was destined to achieve great profits. Despite the rosy picture they painted, most of their friends, among them the man who had introduced them to Candler and the law partner of Thomas, flatly refused and deemed the whole business visionary. This conservative reception did not daunt them, and the two proceeded to incorporate the Coca-Cola Bottling Company on December 8, 1899, in Tennessee. This was almost a month after the appearance of the advertisement which showed that the drink was being bottled and sold in Chattanooga.<sup>32</sup>

Within a short time, a new partner, John Thomas Lupton, another young Chattanooga lawyer, joined the company. The resources of the group were limited, but among them Thomas, Whitehead, and Lupton raised the \$5,000 necessary for the capitalization of the corporation. They did not lose sight of their obligation to Candler. They were determined that the demand for Coca-Cola in bottles would be met wherever it developed. As this might prove too great a task for a single organization, the three principals decided to divide the territory among them, with Thomas in control of one company, and Lupton and Whitehead the other. Though two organizations were thus created, both held to the same plan of operation.<sup>33</sup> They ingeniously determined upon an idea which was different from that used

<sup>32</sup> *Acts of the State of Tennessee Passed by the 52nd General Assembly, 1901*, p. 1283. Five men—Thomas, Whitehead, E. Y. Chapin, Hiram Pearce, and Thomas M. Carothers—were present at the inaugural meeting of the Coca-Cola Bottling Company, December 2, 1899. At the meeting held January 9, 1900, Pearce resigned and J. T. Lupton took his place.

<sup>33</sup> The Thomas interest continues in 1950 to function as a separate company, but those of Lupton and Whitehead were merged with the Coca-Cola Company, the parent organization, in the 1930's.

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by most growing corporations. As demand developed, a careful investigation was made to secure responsible individuals to undertake the ownership of local bottling plants. They did not act as agents for the parent bottling company, but under franchise were the entrepreneurs of their own business. It was impressed upon them that they were entrusted with the responsibility to meet the demand in their allotted areas, and to protect the name of the product, as had been pledged to Candler by Thomas and Whitehead. The functions of the parent organizations were those of furnishing syrup, promoting sales and assisting the local bottler by advising in the management and conduct of his business. An important tenet of both the manufacturer of the syrup and the parent bottling companies was that everyone engaged in the business of distributing Coca-Cola should have a fair return. All of these combined to create an extremely strong organization, which, though composed of individual units with local autonomy, worked as though directed by a single will.

The success of bottled Coca-Cola was not obtained without difficulty and effort. In the first few years, progress was relatively slow and Chattanooga scoffers continued to express ridicule and disbelief. Numbers of imitations and rival companies sprang up. These frequently led to lawsuits, as many attempts to infringe upon the trade-mark or to persuade dealers to substitute other products for Coca-Cola were made. One method of overcoming the latter practice was the creation in 1916 of a distinctive bottle, a bottle which could be recognized if full, empty, or broken. This container, popularly known as the "hobble skirt" bottle, is now known throughout the whole world.<sup>34</sup>

The question of competition, whether fair or unfair, was not the only one which vexed the management. Anti-Coca-Cola crusades and rumors of its harmful effects were common in the early years. At one time the Army prohibited its sale in post exchanges for a few months. One strange instance of objection occurred in Kentucky, when a defeated political candidate protested the election of his

<sup>34</sup> Because of the shape, tradition, even within the company, was that the bottle was modeled after the hobble skirt. Recent research by company officials, however, has disproved this.



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rival on the grounds that undue influence had been used with the electorate by distributing free bottles of Coca-Cola at the polls.

In recent years, the story of Coca-Cola has become a fabulous one. The principal influence in the tremendous increase of use of the beverage has been its availability in the bottled form. Where in 1900, only one Coca-Cola in a hundred was dispensed in a bottle, in 1950 the proportion has increased to approximately eighty-five in every hundred. In the United States, alone, 1,056 bottling plants are in operation. However, the sales are not confined to this country. In the Second World War, American soldiers carried Coca-Cola all over the world. At the time of the North African landing, headquarters in Washington received a cable from General Eisenhower to send "eight Coca-Cola plants immediately." In every other area, Coca-Cola was a constant and happy reminder of home.

When the American soldier re-embarked for the United States, one of the things he left behind was the taste for Coca-Cola. An official of Coca-Cola organization has graphically described its consequences:

Coca-Cola in bottles today is in every corner of the world with the exception of Russia. The street vendor in Cairo and Alexandria today as he turns his head toward Mecca blesses some unknown person for the principal source of his revenue. There are more Coca-Cola signs on the streets of Cairo than in Chattanooga. Last year I saw General James A. Farley present to the manager of the Coca-Cola bottling plant in Manila a Silver Service for obtaining a million gallon award—one of the largest bottling plants in the world today. In the far reaches of the North, the Eskimos receive their Coca-Cola by sled; and the men who were in the South Pacific remember how Coca-cola reached them at a time when a familiar trademark from home was a welcome sight; this was true in Germany and in the Mediterranean and in South America; and you will be interested in knowing that there is more Coca-Cola consumed per capita—that means bottles per person—in Toronto and Montreal, Canada, than in many of the principal cities of the South. So, I believe it is fair to say that Ben Thomas, as he thought at the end of the Spanish-American War that he might try the idea of putting a good drink in a bottle, has indeed from this modest beginning had a wide influence throughout the world.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Printed copy of speech delivered by DeSales Harrison, President of Coca-Cola Bottling Co. (Thomas), to the Chattanooga Rotary Club, September 29, 1949.

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The contribution of Coca-Cola to Chattanooga is a reflection of its growth. Chattanoogaans, eager to associate themselves with the successful enterprise, took franchises and moved to their territory or placed local men in charge to manage their investments. Dividends received from Coca-Cola have been used to develop many Chattanooga industries, new and old. Independently owned local plants equipped to supply bottles, containers, and coolers have expanded as the demand for the drink increased. Directly and indirectly, Coca-Cola has thus created work for hundreds of Chattanoogaans. Atlanta is usually known as the Coca-Cola city, but, as in the instance of the original railroad development and so many activities since, Chattanooga has worked in a complementary association with the Georgia capital.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>36</sup> The material for the story of Coca-Cola was secured through the courtesy of officials of the company: George T. Hunter, since deceased, and DeSales Harrison of Coca-Cola Bottling Company (Thomas); Cartter Lupton and Franklin Garrett of the Coca-Cola Company. See Candler, *op. cit.*, pp. 174-186.





## CHAPTER XVIII

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### *Issues and Controversies*

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WITH the passing of the short Reconstruction era in Tennessee, political affairs in Chattanooga and Hamilton County settled down to normal. As in the years before 1860, when Whig and Democrat vied in almost equal strength, now Republican and Democrat campaigned vigorously to gain narrow majorities. Despite their closeness, however, the contests were seldom bitter. Men discussed issues frankly; only one question was taboo, and that concerned the sincerity of those who had taken sides in 1861.

The largest local issue in the decades immediately following Reconstruction involved the efforts of the Democrats in 1883 to repeal the city charter and make Chattanooga a taxing district. Since the state administration was almost consistently Democratic after 1870, there was a good chance that this could be done. Thereby the small Republican majority in the community would lose its opportunity to elect local officials. Under the proposed plan, the governor would have the power to appoint them. However, as details of the scheme became known, local opposition crystallized. The *Times*, which was against such infringement of the right of franchise, revealed the techniques being used and the portent of the consequences, even though it was consistently Democratic. Conservative Democrats joined with the Republicans to defeat the move. Another effort to accomplish the same purpose was tried two years later, only to die with prompt finality.

On the state and national level, party commitments had much more meaning for the Chattanooga and Hamilton County electorate. Even here, partisan feeling was seldom if ever antagonistically displayed. On at least one occasion, "the Republicans loaned their

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torches and stood as spectators, with less heartburning than ever defeated partisans felt before, and really enjoyed the spectacle of seeing their friends and neighbors having a great, glorious, good time." <sup>1</sup> Tennessee, as has been stated, suffered few of the evils and indignities, which elsewhere in the South were a part of Reconstruction, and had a strong two-party political system immediately after the Brownlow era. The make-up of the parties was largely the same locally as it was in the state as a whole, although there was naturally a variation in proportions.

The nucleus of the Republican party was the East Tennessee Unionists, who were themselves composed of onetime moderate Democrats and Whigs. The leadership of this group was native to the state, although many of the industrialists who had moved to Tennessee, as in the Chattanooga area, aligned themselves with the Republicans. The Negroes, who were not so numerous as in the Gulf and coastal states, were also supporters of the party which had won them their freedom. Their right to exercise the franchise, granted in 1867, was never seriously questioned in the state, possibly because the Republican was consistently the minority party.

The Negro, nevertheless, was the principal factor in loosely uniting the various elements of the Democratic party, which was made up of three principal groups. One supported the old states' rights ideas. Its members were usually nicknamed Bourbons or, as Andrew Johnson called them, the "brigadier-generals." The second included the old-line Whigs, whose fear of Brownlow's financial administration and dislike of the Negro in politics brought them into the Democratic fold, and the northern men whose allegiance had been traditionally Democratic before moving to Tennessee. Supporters of the industrial development of the state, they had the typical conservative attitude of business interests. Aligned with these two was a third group composed largely of the small farmers, or Tennessee yeomen, as one modern historian has termed them, who were referred to politically as the "wool-hat" boys.

Several issues prevented the solidification of this party, the prin-

<sup>1</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, Nov. 12, 1892. The second election of Grover Cleveland for the Presidency marked the first time that both town and county gave majorities to the Democratic party in a national election.

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cipal of which was the question of the state debt. The debt amounted to over \$41,000,000, much of which had been incurred before the war as a result of the assistance the state had furnished railroads and turnpikes. It had grown during the Brownlow administration and as a consequence of the failure to pay interest. The more conservative of the Democrats joined with the Republicans in advocating the full acknowledgment of the debt, regardless of how it was acquired. This position was constantly maintained in the *Times*, which advised its readers that the credit and good name of the state required that no portion of the debt should be repudiated. The Democrats who opposed this action insisted that part of the debt had been fraudulently incurred and it should be scaled down accordingly. This division was the responsible factor in the election of a Republican governor in 1880, as each of the Democratic factions nominated and ran a candidate. Chattanooga and Hamilton County Republicans shared in this victory. Although they polled majorities in every gubernatorial race but two prior to 1900, this was their only chance to celebrate a victory, of which they took full advantage.<sup>2</sup>

On the national level, the Democrats for a generation had had no reason for celebration. On the occasion of the election of Cleveland in 1884, the rooster, then the emblem of the Democratic party, was given his first opportunity to crow since 1856 and he did his best. The *Times*, which had naturally supported Cleveland, prepared to cast the election returns upon a screen from a stereopticon lantern. Unfortunately, it did not work the first night, so reporters announced the totals, as they were received, from a balcony to the assembled crowd. The next night the new device worked and contributed to the excitement of the people, gathered to secure as early news as possible. When it became apparent that Cleveland had been elected, the enthusiasm of the Democrats could hardly be contained.

Chattanooga and Hamilton County followed their usual Republican inclination. The city went for Blaine by a ratio of approximately

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, November 4, 1880. The two exceptions to the usual Republican majority in the town and county were 1876 and 1898. In both cases, it was claimed that voting was very light. In 1876, both areas returned majorities for Hayes. The Democratic victory in the governor's race was a consequence of a division in the Republican ranks.



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three to two, but the taste of victory after almost thirty years of deprivation created so much excitement among the Democrats that they celebrated day and night. The *Times* made no effort to restrain enthusiasm. The crowing rooster grew in size with every edition, regular and extra, until it occupied the whole of the front page. A try at verse accompanied it:

Crow your loudest, noble bird,  
Till the welcome news is heard,  
From the mountains to the sea,  
Through the vales of Tennessee,  
Cleveland, Cleveland, Stephen Grover,  
We're wild as——, drunk all over!  
Blaine, of Maine, can't refrain,  
Waves the bloody shirt again.

A parade of the Cleveland men passed the *Times* office on the celebration night, and as it did, "the building which had been brilliantly illuminated and decorated, seemed transformed into a perfect salamander and from every window and even from the roof fireworks were exploded." The parade broke up in time for its participants to attend a victory ball, at which dancing continued until an early morning banquet was served. The ladies were given favors, although those given to the Republican adherents had "no political reference." However, the men were all presented with "roosters with natural feathers," whatever their party affiliation.<sup>3</sup>

Such postelection celebrations never attained, however, the dramatic heights of the gubernatorial campaign commonly referred to in Tennessee as the War of the Roses. The compromise settlement of the debt question, which was effected in 1883, was not completely satisfactory to conservative Democrats. However, a more important issue was growing in the dissatisfaction of the agricultural group and the younger men of the party, both of whom felt their interests were being neglected. This reached a climax in 1886, when the Democrats in the hope of attaining harmony nominated one of the younger group, Robert Love Taylor, for governor. The Republicans, who met in convention earlier, chose his brother, Alfred Alexander Taylor,

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, November 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 18, 23, 1884.

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in an effort to thwart the opposition's purpose, of which the whole state had knowledge.

The two toured the state together, slept in the same hotel rooms and spoke from the same platforms. Adopting the emblems of the English War of the Roses, the Republican candidate wore a red rose and the Democratic nominee a white one. Their debates were serious on the issues of the day, but were without the usual political invective. However, their idea was to have a good time as well, and the crowds delighted in their fiddle tunes and anecdotes, in which both were as proficient as professional entertainers. Occasionally, they played practical jokes upon each other. The best of these, according to all accounts, occurred on their visit to Chattanooga. The gala welcome they received had been prepared by a joint Republican and Democratic committee. Inspired by the fine reception, the two determined to make the speeches they were to deliver from the hotel balcony as good as possible; Alf worked hard on his during the afternoon and left the manuscript in their hotel room when he was called out to meet some friends, just before Bob was to start on his speech. Suddenly he heard what he recognized as a familiar phrase. After a moment more of listening, he exclaimed:

Great Scott! Listen! He has quoted the text of my speech, word for word, . . . " The mellow voice continued to peal forth in these words: "The illustrious dreamers and creators in the realm of music, the Mozarts, the Beethovens, the Handels and the Mendelssohns, have scaled the purple steepes of the heaven of sweet sounds, unbarred its opal gates and opened its holy of holies to the rapt ear of the world. In their wonderful creations of melody they have given a new interpretation and a sweeter tongue to nature and an audible voice to the music of the stars. Surely humanity can never forget God or our civilization sink to a lower plane while their works endure."

Alf rushed to his room to look for his manuscript and found that it had disappeared. He looked on the table, on the window sill, on the bureau, in the drawer, in his other coat pocket, and lo! it was gone! He shot back to the committee room, only to hear the closing sentences of his speech falling from the lips of the speaker without, and at the same moment to catch the first notes of "Yankee Doodle" resounding through the streets and corridors, reminding him that his turn to speak was now at hand! Bob had delivered *his* speech, *verbatim, et literatim, et punctuatim!* Bob and his few close

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friends who were "on to the joke" enjoyed Alf's predicament more than can be expressed.<sup>4</sup>

True to tradition, Chattanooga and Hamilton County gave majorities to Alf, but the War of the Roses ended as did most state contests with the Democrat, Bob, the victor. Within a few years the area was more seriously aroused over a situation which grew out of a state political circumstance. In mid-July, 1891, two local militia companies, the Lookout Mountain Guards and the Moerlein Zouaves, were called to service in what was termed the Coal Creek War, created by the attempt of the operators of a coal mine at Briceville, approximately one hundred miles north of Chattanooga, to supplant its miners with convicts leased from the state.

The convict lease system was instituted in Tennessee shortly after the end of the war in 1865. At first accepted as a necessary financial expedient, it grew more and more abhorrent to the majority of the citizens. The difficulties in 1891 were precipitated when miners refused to sign an ironclad contract with the operators, which prohibited their right to strike. The owners immediately secured convicts from the holders of the lease from the state to replace them. The miners thus lost their jobs and were evicted from the company houses. Infuriated, they took the initiative and forcefully removed the convicts from the mines to Knoxville. Governor John P. Buchanan responded by terming the miners' act an insurrection and called out the militia to put it down.

For the most part, the July episode was a lark for the militiamen. They restored the convicts to their place in the mine stockade and settled down to a routine, which gave them opportunity to gripe about food, to go off without leave, and in other ways act less than soldierly. The governor met with the miners and promised to call a special session of the legislature which would take up their problems and find a solution for them. Whereupon things quieted down and the Chattanooga militiamen departed for home, less than two weeks after their call.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> J. P. Taylor, A. A. Taylor, and H. L. Taylor, *Life and Career of Senator Robert Love Taylor (Our Bob)*, pp. 172-173.

<sup>5</sup> A. C. Hutson, Jr., "The Coal Miners, Insurrections of 1891 in Anderson County, Tennessee," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publication* No. 7 (1935), pp. 103-121; *Chattanooga Times*, July 15, 17, 18, 21, 22, 1891.



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Supported by the opinion of public mass meetings and editorials in the newspapers, Governor Buchanan called the special session. However, the legislature failed to act on the question of the convict lease system and adjourned after granting additional military authority to the governor. The miners then sought redress in the courts, only to fail there also. Soon, the conservative element among them lost control and again violence was brought into the Tennessee hill country. Convicts were turned loose, buildings were burned, and riotous conditions prevailed at several of the mines in the Coal Creek area.

Indignation filled many columns of the press of the state. Some leveled their editorial comments at the miners, while others like the *Chattanooga Republican* came to their defense. The editor maintained they were not ruffians and cutthroats as had been charged. They were not heroes, he said, "they had merely protected themselves in their homes when the state refused that boon. We recall that when our forefathers, with just provocation, like these miners, rose up in righteous indignation and rebelled against existing laws, their cause was pronounced just, and their acts were approved, though in the eyes of the law the participants were criminals."<sup>6</sup>

Some of the recaptured convicts were brought to Chattanooga in early November. Their condition was "more pitiable than disgusting." But the major worry of the local authorities was what should be done with the hundred "zebras," who had to be cared for and fed by local charity, until they were sent to Nashville. While the state officials were trying to decide how to cope with the situation, free miners were rehired by the mine operators, who abolished the ironclad contract. This was not satisfactory to the lessees of the state convicts, who insisted that the governor uphold their contract with the operators. Finally in mid-December, Buchanan announced that the convicts would again be sent to the mines. He was supported by the *Times*, which said it would "stand by the Governor carrying out the law and the State contract. . . . The lessee question cannot be satisfactorily disposed of by or through rebellion, turning felons loose

<sup>6</sup> *Chattanooga Republican*, Nov. 8, 1891.

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in droves, arson and threats of murder. . . . We will go all lawful lengths to reform our prison policy; we will not approve the efforts at reform which would be certain to make our last condition worse than the first.”<sup>7</sup>

Since protection was essential, the governor ordered into service some state military forces. Chattanooga was called upon to furnish a contingent, and with men from other areas they took up the guard in the troubled section. The presence of the troops and the refusal of one of the mines to use convicts again kept matters quiet until August, 1892. Although friends of the miners throughout the state advised them to refrain from violence, the inability of the men to receive a proper adjustment of their grievances wore their patience thin. The result was the most serious of the series of violent actions, inasmuch as the area of lawlessness extended to a greater number of mines scattered over several counties.

On August 17, the riot bell of the new courthouse at Chattanooga rang for the first time by the order of the sheriff. The remaining members of the local militia companies were assembled and sent with those from Knoxville to the center of the trouble. This detachment was insufficient to the need, and the miners overcame them almost immediately. The governor called out two additional regiments and asked the sheriffs of nearby counties to deputize posses to aid the troopers. All of these men were brought together in Chattanooga to organize for the campaign.

Calls were sent to 400 men by the sheriff of Hamilton County to form his posse. The majority of them reported to the courthouse with excuses, some legitimate and some flimsy. The crowd laughed when one “declared that he couldn’t hit a flock of barns with a gun and asked to be made cook.” It was necessary to assemble a second group before the quota was secured. In the meantime, the regiments of the National Guard had assembled in town, giving it a martial air as they drilled about the streets. Among the “tense crowds,” which watched events, some unknown faces were observed and rumors spread that they were spies of the miners. The papers consequently warned everyone, “Watch the strangers within our gates.”

<sup>7</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, December 16, 1891.

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There was no local difficulty and the contingents moved to the troubled area, where armed conflict shortly broke out again. Men were killed, among them one of the Chattanoogaans, but the reinforcements proved too strong for the miners, some of whose leaders were arrested and imprisoned. Except for one small outbreak in the spring of 1893, the coal fields of East Tennessee were peaceful. One reason was the strength of the militia, but in addition there was renewed hope that the convict lease system would be abolished by the next session of the legislature. With the cessation of armed resistance, a portion of the troops was sent home. Many of them were disgusted, as displayed by members of the Lookout Mountain Guards, who planned to resign because of what they termed the bad treatment the state had given them.<sup>8</sup>

The authority of the state had been re-established, and the efforts of the miners to take matters into their own hands had been defeated. But the effect of the conflict eliminated Governor Buchanan as an important influence in the state Democratic party. At the next convention the Bourbons took control again and nominated Peter Turney, prominent lawyer and jurist,<sup>9</sup> who won the election by a typical state Democratic majority. Among the first items on the legislative agenda was the establishment of a state penitentiary, as public opinion had not allowed the mistakes of the miners to blind it to the iniquities of the convict lease system. However, the method of financing the new policy furnished one of the major issues of the 1894 state campaign, in which a Chattanoogaan for the first time was a serious candidate for the governor's chair.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*, August 19, August 21, 1892; A. C. Hutson, Jr., "The Overthrow of the Convict Lease System in Tennessee," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications*, No. 8, (1936) pp. 82-103.

<sup>9</sup> Before the war, Turney, whose home was in Winchester, had a law office in Chattanooga. After the election of Lincoln, he became an ardent secessionist and was a leader in the effort to force the secession of Franklin County when the state refused to secede. He was the commander of the first unit to leave the Chattanooga area for the Virginia front. He had been a member of the Supreme Court after 1870, and from 1886 to his election as governor served as Chief Justice.

<sup>10</sup> In 1878, Dr. E. M. Wight, physician and mayor of Chattanooga in 1877, was the Republican nominee but refused to campaign because of his duties in the yellow-fever epidemic of that year.



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Henry Clay Evans was a native of Pennsylvania who was reared in Wisconsin. During his war service, he had been stationed in Chattanooga and returned in 1870 to make the city his home. He engaged in the iron business and for a time was associated with the Roane Iron Company. Always interested in politics, he served locally as alderman and mayor, and twice represented the district in Congress. At the time of his nomination by the Republicans for governor, he was Assistant-Postmaster General of the United States. He was young and aggressive, and his reputation as a businessman was known in financial and industrial circles throughout the state. He was a good opponent for Turney, who was renominated by the Democrats.

The campaign manager for Evans was Newell Sanders, the plow manufacturer. The two conducted a vigorous campaign. Evans spoke in all corners of the state, discussing national and state issues. He criticized the administration's financial policy, particularly with reference to the state penitentiary. He pointed to the years of prosperity under the Republican national regimes as compared to the panic which had broken in Cleveland's administration. In contrast to the youthful, energetic Republican candidate, the aging Turney made but one campaign appearance, while those who spoke for him largely avoided any discussion of issues. When the election was over, all Tennesseans were surprised to hear that for the first time in more than a decade, a Republican had been chosen governor. Though the margin was extremely close, amounting to only 748 votes, some Democrats were content with the decision. But the Democratic organization began to charge the Republicans with fraud. However, four of the principal Democratic newspapers of the state, including the *Chattanooga Times*, insisted that fair play required the acceptance of the result.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Eugene Lewis, *The Tennessee Gubernatorial Campaign and Election of 1894* (unpublished Master's thesis), p. 111. In addition to the *Chattanooga Times*, the other papers were the *Nashville Banner*, the *Memphis Avalanche*, the *Memphis Scimitar*. These papers steadily supported the position that Evans had won the election and should be seated. When Turney was named governor, the *Times* editorially stated that it made no apologies for its position, which was a consequence of its "affection for the honor and interests of Tennessee, first; and for the honor and interests of the Democratic party, second." The *Chattanooga News*, also Democratic, supported Turney throughout the controversy.

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The decision of Turney and his associates was to contest the election before the legislature. In his message to that body Turney charged that Evans's alleged election was "due to gross and fraudulent disregard and violation of the law, and that an investigation [would] establish the fact." Though Evans was sworn into office, he was never recognized by state officials, and Turney continued to act even after the expiration of his term. A joint committee was appointed, composed of five senators and seven members of the house, who followed their party affiliations and threw out sufficient votes to give victory to the Democrats.<sup>12</sup>

These exciting episodes in state affairs and politics were interesting interludes in an otherwise generally uniform pattern in local elections up to about the time of the Evans-Turney controversy. Even then, the interest was of a less dramatic sort, although some of the dyed-in-the-wool Republicans were amazed by the change which took place. After years of virtually unbroken success, their party began to lose elections. In contests for city mayor, the change was abrupt; since 1890, only two Republicans have been chosen for that office. In county campaigns, the natural inclination of the rural residents to the Republican party continued to exercise an influence and resulted in a victory for at least one candidate in almost every elec-

<sup>12</sup> Three of the five senators and four of the seven assemblymen, among the latter the young Cordell Hull, furnished the Democratic majority on the committee. The election returns were as follows: Evans, 105,104; Turney, 104,356; and Mims, the Populist candidate, 23,088. The revised returns were Turney, 94,794; Evans, 92,440. The Populist vote was unchanged. This report was accepted by the legislature by a vote of 70 to 57. The Republicans were joined by 9 Democrats in voting against the majority report.

This protracted dispute attracted attention over the country and gave additional prominence to Evans and Sanders. Though both continued to engage in business at Chattanooga, they were active in the affairs of the Republican party. Sanders served as a national committeeman and was appointed to the United States Senate to fill out the term of Senator Bob Taylor, when the latter died in 1912. Evans was made Commissioner of Pensions under McKinley, but aroused antagonism when he contended against fraudulent and wealthy claimants of disability pensions for service in the Civil War. He was then made Consul-General at London, which except for a term as city commissioner of Chattanooga was his last appearance in office.

For a full discussion of this campaign, see Lewis, *op. cit.* Briefer accounts can be found in Robison, *Bob Taylor and the Agrarian Revolt in Tennessee*, pp. 181-187; Hamer, *op. cit.*, II, 700-701; Moore, *op. cit.*, I, 581-582.

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tion. On the state and national level, party affiliation was closely followed, with the result that the Republicans carried the city and the county in the majority of the contests down to 1906. From that time on, the Democrats were consistent victors except in the Presidential elections of the 1920's.<sup>13</sup>

This general reversal of the post-Civil War pattern in Chattanooga can be partially attributed, at least, to three factors: the appearance of independent voters, most of whom seemed to have deserted the Republican fold; the increase in population; and a decrease in the proportion of Negro residents.

In the city, the independent voter began to play an important role about 1890. The editor of the local Republican paper, alarmed by the tendency, wrote several long editorials reprehending the practice of voting for candidates rather than party. "*The Republican*," he stated, "has an unending war to make against these party 'affiliators,' who regard not party lines and party obligations, and party consequences." He went on to say that the time had come "to stop this nefarious business," and called for a "Republican revival."<sup>14</sup>

This dilemma, however, was not completely created by the independent voter who refused to follow the party ticket blindly. Chattanooga's population had grown rapidly in the boom years of the 1880's. This influx consisted largely of members of the working class,

<sup>13</sup> Republican mayors were elected in Chattanooga in 1899 and 1915. Chattanooga and Hamilton County voted for Republican gubernatorial candidates in 1890, 1892, 1894, 1896, 1900, 1902, and 1920. In 1904 and 1910, Chattanooga voted for the Democrat, but the greater rural majority for the Republican placed the county in that column. In the Presidential races, the city and county voted for the Republican in 1896, 1900, 1904, 1924, and 1928. In 1920, Chattanooga gave a majority to the Democrat while the county as a whole went Republican.

A good example of the shifting political tide is found in the career of Judge John A. Moon, who was elected to the United States Congress from the 3rd Tennessee District, which includes Hamilton County, for 12 consecutive terms, beginning in 1896. Moon, a Democrat, lost in both Chattanooga and the county in his first campaign. In 1898, he carried both city and county, but in the following campaign, he lost in Chattanooga. In 1902, no opposing candidate faced him, while in 1904, he won in Chattanooga and lost the county vote. From 1906 on, he gained good majorities in both, until 1920, when he lost his seat in the general Republican sweep of that year.

<sup>14</sup> *Chattanooga Republican*, November 15, 22, 1892.



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as a comparison of the city directories for 1881 and 1890 displays. In the earlier periods, there had been a close relation between the interests of the mill owners and managers, on the one hand, and the workers, on the other. The latter believed that what affected one affected all. But the new group felt no such close association. Their numbers did not grow appreciably in the 1890's, when the town increased but little, but after 1900, particularly as the textile industry developed, a new period of population growth occurred. A large proportion of these new citizens were workers who came from Georgia and Alabama. Their customary Democratic affiliation naturally had a permanent influence upon the political composition of the community.

These newcomers gradually began to offset the consistent Republican vote of the Negro, who from 1872 to 1910 constituted about 40 per cent of the population of Chattanooga. After that date, the ratio dropped more than 10 per cent in two decades as a consequence of the growth of white population and the exodus of Negroes from the city as a part of the great migration to Northern urban communities.<sup>15</sup>

Negroes were consistently a colorful element in the community, although their contributions to it were limited by their economic and cultural circumstances. Many of their old folkways were retained.

<sup>15</sup> The United States Bureau of the Census gives the following population figures for Chattanooga:

<i>Year</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Colored</i>	<i>Total</i>
1870	3,872	2,221	6,903
1880	7,807	5,032	12,892
1890	16,525	12,563	29,100
1900	17,032	13,122	30,154
1910	26,660	17,942	44,604
1920	39,001	18,894	57,895
1930	86,509	33,289	119,798
1940	91,712	36,404	128,116
1950	90,617	39,276	131,041
1960	86,783	42,141	130,009

The large increase in the decade between 1920 and 1930 is attributable to the annexation of some of the suburbs. The discrepancy in totals occasionally is due to Indians or others not included in the categories, white and colored.

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They enjoyed pretentious displays and parades. They delighted in secret societies, which organized in great numbers. Religion played an important part in their lives. "Old time camp meetings" and baptizings in the river brought them together in large crowds.

Not infrequently upwards of a hundred were immersed on a single occasion. The ceremonies were usually held at the foot of Market Street, and the attendance of spectators was almost invariably large. Many white persons went, but as a rule they were not actuated by religious impulses. Seekers after amusement were they, and sometimes their conduct was far from commendable, especially their comments upon the solemn ordinance in administration. One Sunday amusement of an entirely unexpected variety was furnished involuntarily. A stern-wheel steamboat was fastened at the wharf, stern downstream. A considerable number of colored men made ingenious use of the great wheel, slipping planks through between the paddles, resting their ends upon the arms, so that it could not turn, thus converting the paddles into seats affording a first class view of the proceedings. The parson had selected a spot not far below the steamer and exactly in line with the wheel, for the performance of his function. While he was pronouncing the formal words in administering the rite to about the fiftieth candidate, there was heard a sinister crash, followed by swirl and splash and splutter, in the midst of all of which thirty or forty men received baptism of water without his ministrations. Some of the planking had broken under too great pressure, and the wheel occupants were struggling for life in the Tennessee. The agitation of the water swept the parson and the aspirant from their feet, and they were subjects for rescue, which was furnished by some fishermen who had been looking on from a nearby skiff.<sup>16</sup>

The Negroes' innate love of music was evident in church, at work, and when gathered in groups in the evening. The fine quality of some of their voices attracted local attention first and then won them national and international acclaim. An early Fisk Jubilee singer was Hinton Alexander, a Chattanooga. His ability was discovered while he was working for the Roane Iron Company, an occupation much like that of one of the greatest American Negro singers, Roland Hayes. The latter also gained the attention of Chattanooga music lovers while working in one of the local foundries.

<sup>16</sup> Wiltse Manuscript, p. 783.

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The majority of the Negroes were laborers, although in such services as barbering, waiting on tables in restaurants, and hackdriving, they had a virtual monopoly around the turn of the century. Some of the more gifted among them reached positions of minor importance in railroading and iron-molding. Others were small merchants, and an occasional individual surmounted the racial handicap and established himself in such trades as contracting and building. Some were frugal and made property investments, and at least one accumulated considerable wealth in the boom years. In the professions, lawyers, doctors, dentists, pharmacists, teachers, ministers, and journalists were numbered. Most of them, however, were limited by their educational opportunities and their practice was confined to their own group, although in the yellow-fever crisis, one Negro doctor from Murfreesboro performed heroically and received the unstinted praise of local authorities.

Approximately twenty newspapers have been undertaken by members of the race, although most have been short-lived. The most prominent of them was the *Blade*, edited by Randolph Miller, who acquired his training as a pressman for Adolph Ochs's *Times*. White as well as colored people read his paper, partly because of the humorous content of its quaint expressions, but also because of the rough wisdom the editor displayed. "He had a rugged sense of what was right and what was otherwise," one white contemporary noted; "of that which people ought to do and ought not to do. He felt himself a kind of political lawgiver, and in affairs of morals a monitor for the colored people. In very truth, he didn't hesitate at all to tell white folks about some of their shortcomings and faults in the way of commission. His ideas about these concerns were expressed in such unique bits of philosophy or whatever it was, that some of the white newspaperfolk amused themselves by quoting them frequently and rather freely, under the title of 'Gems from the *Blade*.'" <sup>17</sup>

The Negro participation in politics was not confined to voting. Some of them held office, although for the most part in minor capacities. Because they lived largely within the same wards, the representation in the city government was confined to aldermen and

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 419; *Hamilton County Herald*, Feb. 2, 1945. Article by E. Y. Chapin.



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councilmen chosen from those areas. From the end of the Civil War until 1910, it was customary for at least one Negro to be upon the city council or board of aldermen. Other members of the group were chosen for such elective positions as tax assessor, justice of the peace, and constable, and for such minor appointive offices as deputy sheriff, city jailer, member of the board of education and police force. One served for a while as chairman of the Republican executive committee. The most important offices held by Negroes were those of state legislator,—held by two men,—and circuit court clerk.<sup>18</sup>

The Negro was a conservative Republican in political affiliation, but his influence declined as the local organization of that party lost strength. This tendency became more noticeable when in 1910 the city government was changed to the commission form. Under the new system, members of the commission were chosen in city-wide elections, rather than from constituent wards. As a consequence, no Negro has been elected to the city government since that time, although in certain wards the Negro vote has been frequently corralled by bosses to play an important part in contests.

From the beginning, relations between the races in Chattanooga contained little evidence of misunderstanding and bitterness. Three times, colored men have been taken from the jail and lynched (the last was in 1906), but each time the town, as shown by newspaper comment, was outraged by the circumstance. In the last instance, the sheriff of the county was held in contempt of the Supreme Court of the United States and imprisoned, inasmuch as the Court had agreed to hear an appeal and had entrusted the official with the care of the accused. Although Negroes have not achieved the freedom of action in Chattanooga they have attained in some areas of the United States, neither have they suffered the inequity which has been their lot in sections of the deeper South.

Segregation of the races is observed as in other cities, and inter-marriage is forbidden by Tennessee law. This once led to a suit which

<sup>18</sup> J. B. White, comp., *Biography and Achievements of the Colored Citizens of Chattanooga*. This well-illustrated little book contains much interesting material about Chattanooga's Negro leaders. *Chattanooga Times*, September 18, 1938, article by J. T. Duncan, "From Slavery: Negroes' Progress."

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was possibly the most interesting in the courts of the area. In the mountains of East Tennessee, there is a mysterious clannish people, popularly called the Melungeons, who are very dark-skinned. No one knows their origin, although many theories have been advanced by amateur ethnologists, who have guessed them to be the remnants of the Lost Colony of Roanoke Island, or Welsh, or Portuguese, or Indians, or Phoenicians.

The Chancery Court of Hamilton County in 1873 held they were not Negroid in origin. The case arose over the inheritance of a half Melungeon girl of some land in the Moccasin Bend. The sisters and brothers of her father claimed she was illegitimate, as under the law her father could not marry her mother, who, they maintained, was a Negro. Lewis Shepherd, who was her counsel, although presenting no documentary proof, argued that the Melungeons were "pure blooded Carthaginians, as much so as were Hannibal and the Moor of Venice. . . ." His presentation convinced the Chancellor. The property was ordered conveyed to the young woman, but the origin of the Melungeons remains a mystery.<sup>19</sup>

Some of Chattanooga's most interesting social and political questions have been created by its proximity to the boundary between Tennessee and Georgia. The southern city limit of Chattanooga coincides with the line between the two, with residential or business areas continuing without cessation on into the latter state. This juxtaposition has had many interesting consequences. The profitable industry and business operations, added to the national attention drawn by scenic and historic features, have made Georgians repeatedly argue that a fair part of Chattanooga belongs to them. A Georgia governor, on a visit in 1947, facetiously said: "There has been a great deal of legal controversy throughout the years as to whether Chattanooga really belongs to Georgia rather than to Tennessee. . . . I took Mayor Wasson in when I arrived here and welcomed him as the mayor of the second largest city in Georgia. There is no longer need for the cities of Savannah, Macon, and Augusta to be fighting over

<sup>19</sup> Lewis Shepherd, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-90; W. L. Worden, "Sons of the Legend," *Saturday Evening Post*, October 18, 1947; *Chattanooga Times*, February 10, 1941 (article by John Fort), June 17, 1945.

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which is the second largest city in Georgia because that is the city of Chattanooga, Georgia.”<sup>20</sup>

The location of the northern boundary line of Georgia has been a matter of dispute since the grant of King George II, which established the colony. At first, it was between South Carolina and Georgia, and was settled when the western lands of the two states were ceded to the Federal Government about the beginning of the nineteenth century. It was then that the thirty-fifth parallel was definitely established as the line of demarcation between Georgia and areas to the north. It was not until the late fall of 1817, however, that the boundary between Georgia and Tennessee was surveyed.

The surveying parties met at Nickajack Mountain, where Alabama joins her sister states, and ran the line eastward to North Carolina. Their reports and accompanying maps were accepted by the two legislatures at their meetings in 1819. James Camak, who was one of the Georgia party, was later inspired by a belief that the line had been inaccurately located to make an unauthorized individual survey. His conclusions, which he reported to the Georgia officials, were that the first line had been run too far to the south and did not coincide with the thirty-fifth parallel. In place of the earlier dispute between Georgia and South Carolina, which involved a twelve-mile strip stretching from the headwaters of the Savannah River to the South Seas, Camak's survey inaugurated a controversy over an area approximately a half mile wide along the 109 miles of common boundary with Tennessee. This territorial claim, unlike the former, has not been satisfactorily resolved, and has risen at intervals to seize public attention.<sup>21</sup>

In the Cherokee Removal, a bitter controversy began when Georgia militia ignored Tennessee sovereignty and crossed the line to seize John Ross and his guest, John Howard Payne. By the time of the Confederate War, however, law enforcement officers had acquired more respect for the boundary, which frequently provided

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*, May 15, 1947. The Georgia executive was M. E. Thompson, who was then holding office for a portion of the unexpired term of the deceased Eugene Talmadge. Chattanooga's mayor at the time was Hugh Wasson.

<sup>21</sup> C. E. Battle, *The Georgia-Tennessee Boundary Dispute*.



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refuge for lawbreakers. When General John Beatty of the Federal Army was stationed in the area immediately after the battles at Chattanooga, his headquarters were in Tennessee while his troops were camped in Georgia. This proximity to the boundary line aroused his interest.

"The forest in which we are encamped," he wrote in his diary, "was, in former times, a rendezvous for the blacklegs, thieves, murderers and outlaws generally of two states—Tennessee and Georgia. An old inhabitant informs me he has seen hundreds of these persecuted and proscribed gentry encamped about this spring. When an officer came with a writ to arrest them, they would step a few yards into the state of Georgia and laugh at him. So when Georgia sought to lay its official clutches on an offending Georgian, the latter would walk over into Tennessee and argue the case across the line. It was a very convenient spot for lawbreakers. To reach across this imaginary line and draw a man would be kidnapping, an insult to a sovereign state, and in a States' rights country such a procedure could not be tolerated. Requisitions from the governors of Tennessee and Georgia might, of course, be procured, but this would take time, and in this time, the offender could walk leisurely into Alabama or North Carolina, neither of which state is very far away." <sup>22</sup>

Modern times have seen an increase of the difficulties noted by Beatty, as the automobile has complicated the problem of law enforcement. For some years, one point of issue, which received national attention, was created by a difference in marriage laws. The justices of the peace in Walker and Dade counties, Georgia, were known popularly as the "marrying squires." The ease with which marriage licenses could be obtained in their state was accentuated by their roadside billboards. These attracted the attention of joy-riding couples, whose ensuing hasty action frequently led to domestic trouble and eventually to the divorce court. The preponderance of divorce decrees over marriage licenses issued in Hamilton County was disproportionately high. Objective studies determined that ready access to Georgia's easy road to marriage was a major cause for Chattanooga's unfortunate reputation as a divorce mill.

As is true of most boundary places, Chattanooga has seen a con-

<sup>22</sup> Beatty, *op. cit.*, p. 266.

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stant interflow of commodities, ideas, and persons from the neighbor state. Georgians have found occupations in Chattanooga's industries, and Chattanoogans have reciprocated by assisting in developing the communities of North Georgia. The press of Chattanooga has always given a large amount of attention to the activities of these nearby neighbors. Cultural relations as well as business interests have grown ever closer. The Georgia Conference was among the organizations of the Methodist Episcopal Church which participated in establishing the University of Chattanooga. Operating as an area college, the institution has offered educational opportunity to residents of North Georgia along with others in the environs of the community. A large part of a concert audience or a group visiting a display of paintings in the city or the crowd attending an athletic contest is likely to be from communities in Georgia.

The most peculiar of the many relationships between Georgia and Chattanooga revolve around the property owned by the state within the city. It was obtained when the Western & Atlantic Railroad was constructed. Originally, this was entirely outside the community, but as the latter grew the switchyards and terminal became the center of the expanding downtown district. This area, which was needed for business use, became a hindrance, as leasing difficulties and lack of streets placed handicaps upon its proper development. In Chattanooga, as in most American communities, growth was haphazard, without plan. Buildings were constructed where it was later necessary to open streets, and rights were granted which later had to be rescinded. It was one of the latter which created the difficulty between Georgia and the city, when it was found that trackage rights to the river, running down Railroad Avenue, now Broad Street, had to be withdrawn.

Although there were similar circumstances which arose at various times, the most excitement occurred in 1926 over the effort of the city to open three streets through property belonging to the state of Georgia. There was a fine legal point involved: Can the right of eminent domain be exercised against property already in use for a public purpose? This was complicated by the fact that the state had leased the property to a private corporation, the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railway, which was not disposed to contest the

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city's action. But the appeal of Georgia to the courts gave promise of a long series of legal arguments. However, the city seized an opportunity between injunctions to put demolition squads in action.

In the middle of the night, with the city commissioner on hand to direct them, trucks and cars were driven through the breach created by tearing down the buildings which stood in the way. South Broad Street was thus officially declared open to the tune of "Marching through Georgia," struck up by a band which "chanced to be practicing nearby." The matter eventuated in a contract in which Georgia and its lessee, the N. C. & St. L., agreed to the use of the streets, in return for a relinquishment of taxes which had been assessed against the railroad by the city. There the matter stands: Chattanooga uses the three streets daily but firmly imbedded in the sidewalks bordering the streets are bronze markers making evident the fact that the property is still claimed by Georgia.

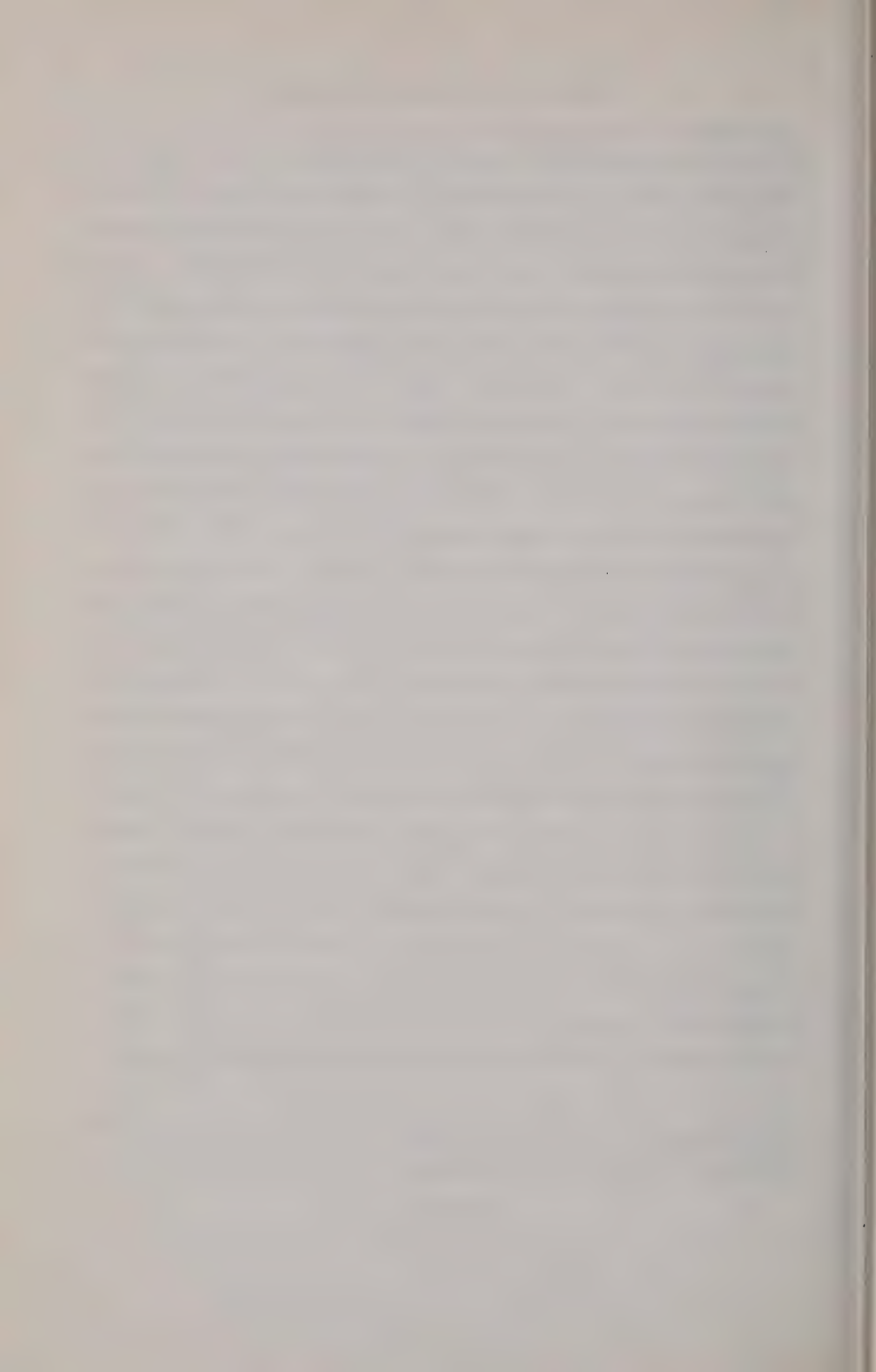
Chattanooga's direct action, possibly because of the use of that forbidden piece of music, "Marching through Georgia," while the officials of the state were attempting to proceed through legal channels, immediately reawakened the old issue. The governor of Georgia turned back to the border contention of the past. In a message to his attorney general, he said, "In view of the unjust spirit manifested by the city of Chattanooga, we feel disposed to push the establishment of the true line and of preparing our data for such effort."<sup>23</sup>

This implied threat to annex Chattanooga to Georgia was but one in a series, some in fun and some with implied earnestness, which have brought the subject to the fore for a brief period. But any serious study of the circumstances leads directly to the statement of the United States Supreme Court in deciding a similar issue between Virginia and Tennessee. "A boundary line between States," the verdict of the court reads, "which has been run out, located and marked upon the earth and afterwards recognized and acquiesced in by them for a long course of years, is conclusive even if it be ascertained that it varies somewhat from the courses given in the original grant."<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> *Chattanooga News*, May 4, 5, 7, 8, 1926.

<sup>24</sup> *United States Reports*, CXLVIII, 503.





## CHAPTER XIX

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### *"Of Many Things"*

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ALTHOUGH the emergence of contemporary society defies exact dating by the chronicler, there were strong evidences of its characteristics in the Chattanooga area at the close of the nineteenth century. Changes were occurring in every phase of life at a tempo in keeping with America's industrial expansion. The nation-wide activity of big business and industry was beginning to subordinate purely local operations. Labor organizations assumed a greater importance, while social agencies came into being to give support to the unfortunate. As world events brought new troops to train at Fort Oglethorpe, it grew more evident that the individual citizen's horizons could not long be contained by his own community or region. However, the relative isolation of much of Chattanooga's environs postponed corresponding change in those localities and kept the city in touch with the more conservative and simpler life of its rural neighbors. Thus, the full acceptance of the modern world was not realized for some time, and then only after numerous struggles released the hand of the past.

The dawn of the twentieth century in Chattanooga found its citizens as puzzled as those of other communities about the date when the change of centuries actually took place. Some maintained that January 1, 1900, by the very implication of the digits, was the beginning of the new period, while others pointed out in friendly disagree-

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ment that in any century the hundred figure was necessary for completion. But whatever the result of the controversy, the majority obviously determined that a good celebration of both dates was in order. At least, the numerous parties and watch services show that is what happened. Once again, the townspeople at this inventory-taking time believed that they and their city were on the track to success, after the discouraging days which had followed the Panic of 1893. The old dream of being the "Pittsburgh of the South" had vanished, but in its place there was emerging a sounder economic base, one built upon a diversification of industry.

In the very days of the panic, itself, the political authorities, the manufacturing and business interests, and newspapers of the town joined in a campaign to attract new plants. It contained none of the usual efforts to bribe, by extravagant grants of land or by exemption from taxes, the interest of prospective newcomers, for "sopping and subsidizing" new manufacturers held more danger for the community than could be overcome. Furthermore, such schemes were unfair to existing business, which had worked to achieve success without assistance. Any plan to increase industrial capacity should naturally consider the interest of the established concerns, and emphasis was placed on securing entrepreneurs whose products would not compete for the labor or the markets of the local firms. Another phase of the program was to encourage mechanics living in the town to set up shops for themselves.<sup>1</sup>

Diverse but limited results were almost spontaneous with the effort. A woolen-mill, a butter-dish factory, a cotton-seed mill, and plants to make novelties and curtain poles, give an idea of the variety. Stovemaking began to assume important proportions, as the local ores could be effectively used for this purpose. Although the growth was slow and the plants were small, most of them have operated to the present day.

The most important phase of the campaign to attract new industry

<sup>1</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, January 7, September 29, 1893. This plan was prepared for the Chamber of Commerce by a committee under the leadership of George W. Ochs, brother of Adolph Ochs. He continued this activity through his two terms as mayor from 1893 through 1897.



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was focused on textiles. Although early attempts had been made to develop plants in this category, none of them had been successful and for a number of years there was no textile mill in the city. However, the local promoters noted that plants in Dalton, Nashville, and Atlanta were prosperous, and that the big mill at Trion was one of the largest moneymakers in North Georgia. In 1895, the city sent representatives to New England to try to persuade cotton manufacturers there to locate in Chattanooga, but without success.

Two years earlier, the Park Woolen Mill had started. Its operations were small and confined to the manufacture of Kentucky jeans. In 1906, one of the organizers, John L. Hutcheson, went into business for himself, opening the Peerless Woolen Mills in Rossville. It grew to be the largest operation of its kind in the area, but closed permanently in December 1961, after having been absorbed by the Burlington Mills in 1952. In the cotton textile industry, Garnett Andrews was the most important early figure. He was reared in Chattanooga, as his father had located there in 1881, and entered the business world while still a young man. In 1895, he organized the Chattanooga Knitting Mills, which began operations with only eight machines. Five years later, he and some associates started the Richmond Spinning Company with an equipment of 10,000 mule spindles. These pioneers led the way in what has become one of the principal industrial activities in the community.<sup>2</sup>

Such developments, though important to the community, followed the general pattern of American industry everywhere. In one instance in the region, the interesting history of the Industrial Revolution was repeated within a relatively short period.

For years in the Southern highlands and foothills, a variety of handicrafts had been practiced largely for the personal use of the

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, September 12, 1948, reprint of article by Herbert S. Thatcher. The name of the Chattanooga Knitting Mills was changed after some years of operation to the Richmond Hosiery Company, by which it is now known. According to information from the Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce textile employment in 1962 totalled 9,400. The larger plants—those employing more than 500 operatives each—were: The Dixie Mercerizing Company, The Dupont Company, The Signal Knitting Mills, and The Standard-Coosa-Thatcher Company. The Dupont plant, which manufactures nylon yarn, is the most recent addition to the list.

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makers and their families. Among them was the making of candle-wick bedspreads, known also as the tufted or the "turfed" bedspread, by working designs on sheeting with coarse, colored, cotton yarn. One woman who lived in the little community of Dalton, Georgia, discovered around 1900 that there was a sale for the product of her art, and developed a mail order business, which soon extended to all parts of the country.<sup>3</sup> A greater impetus to the industry came with the improvement of the roads of the area. At the time a trip to as close a community as Atlanta by automobile was likely to require a day or more. The traveler, though equipped to meet most emergencies, at times had to have the assistance of teams of mules or yokes of oxen to pull his car out of the mire. The increasing popularity of the automobile after the First World War brought a new interest in good roads, and improvement naturally followed. As the number of tourists grew, the rural bedspread makers began to display their wares on lines hanging by the roadside. The colorful products of their folk art, which featured such old designs as the Peacock, Wreaths of Roses, Bird in the Trees, and Napoleon's Wreath, attracted immediate attention from the travelers. These front-yard sales grew to such an extent that it became necessary to enlist the assistance of people who lived away from the highway.

The roadside displays not only attracted the traveling feminine buyer, but also caught the attention of enterprising businessmen who planned to market the bedspreads in city stores. They contracted with the workers and furnished materials with the designs stamped on them. The work was still done in the homes by farm wives, who used the results of their handicraft to supplement family incomes. This putting-out method, as it is termed, represents the second stage of the Industrial Revolution.

This gave a new stimulus to the industry and brought new workers to it. The county agent of Gordon County, Georgia, reported that, in

<sup>3</sup> Mrs. Catherine Evans Whitener was the first apparently to engage in the sale of the bedspreads on a commercial scale. Interview in *Chattanooga Times*, June 1, 1946, at the time of the meeting of Tufted Textile Manufacturers Association in Chattanooga. In recognition of her contribution, the association presented her with a silver tray.

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over ninety per cent of the farm families of his county, someone was making tufted bedspreads.<sup>4</sup>

Before long, typical American ingenuity invented a machine, which took a large portion of the business out of the home into the factory. The cycle of the Industrial Revolution was thus completed by the late 1930's. Although the product of the chenille machine lacks the spirit of the handicraft worker, it has the typical advantages of commercial production. The center of the industry remains in North Georgia in the community of Dalton, but Chattanooga in recent years had six chenille textile manufacturing concerns and one maker of the machinery. Despite the competition of the factory-made product, the clothesline displays of curtains, spreads, bathmats, and other products, rich with the imagination, color, and designs of the handicraft maker, still sway in the breeze along the highways of the area.

The progress of diversification in the early part of the twentieth century was steady except for the short panic period of 1907. As was generally true in America the tremendous upheaval of 1914 was totally unexpected in Chattanooga. The news of the assassination of the Austrian Archduke Ferdinand and his wife was noted but soon vanished from the columns of the newspapers, as no one thought there would be any further implications than the execution of the assassin. When toward the end of July foreign dispatches emphasized the growing danger of a European war, people were startled. The *Times* editor reminded his readers that should a conflict begin, it apparently would lead to general war, as no nation appeared “ready to undertake the role of peacemaker.”<sup>5</sup>

Although it was hoped that few of war's consequences would be felt in this country, business immediately reflected the disturbed conditions. The closing of the New York Stock Exchange shook the economic structure of the nation. Prices for imported commodities soared while demand for many American items fell drastically, as the war interrupted civilian life in Europe and Great Britain. The result in Chattanooga was virtual business stagnation until it was necessary for the Old World to turn to America's factories for all

<sup>4</sup> A. H. Eaton, *Handicrafts of the Southern Highlands*, p. 225.

<sup>5</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, July 25, 1914.



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kinds of war materials. Within little more than a year from the outbreak of the conflict, local industry began to boom. In the fall of 1915, war contracts, particularly in the iron industry, stimulated a return to prosperous conditions generally. From then until the end of hostilities, Chattanooga's plants ran at full capacity. But as financial worries were removed, others of greater magnitude arose to take their place.

Interest in the European War was but slightly diverted by the trouble in Mexico, even though the cavalry units of Fort Oglethorpe and the local Troop B of the State National Guard were ordered to the border for the period of that difficulty. Chattanoogaans debated over the issue of letting Europe attend to its quarrels, as internationalism and isolationism both had active supporters. In the presidential election of 1916, the majority in the city and the county supported Woodrow Wilson. Indignation created by German insistence on unrestricted submarine warfare and other infringements of American principles strengthened sympathy with the Allies. When, in April, 1917, war was declared, Chattanoogaans agreed with the decision, believing that every effort had been honorably made to avoid conflict.<sup>6</sup>

On April 2, they flew the flag from business offices, plants and homes to emphasize their belief that their cause was just. "From now on there can be but two classes of people in America," a resolution adopted at a mass meeting stated: "American and traitors." With zeal reminiscent of 1861 and 1898, they went to work to implement this statement. Committees were organized for a variety of war activities. Women who had been rolling bandages for the assistance of the Allies redoubled their efforts. The Chamber of Commerce dedicated all its facilities to the tasks ahead. Volunteers made speeches and street talks in an effort to explain the meaning of the war. In the feverish ardor of the time, some ridiculous blunders were committed.

<sup>6</sup> The editor of the *Chattanooga Times* wrote on April 1, 1917: "Herr Zimmermann, the German foreign minister, in a public statement, emphasizes the fact that Germany decided months ago to force the United States into a war with her." Despite Chattanooga's cosmopolitan population, the pro-German element was in a definite minority, and after the entry of the United States into the war, even this small support of the German position vanished.

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Spies were found under many innocent beds and behind imaginary bushes.

In Liberty Loan drives, quotas were frequently assigned without regard to an ability to invest, and attempts were made to shame people into participation. “Placards were displayed everywhere bearing words and phrases of advice and command, the most familiar, perhaps, being ‘Stop! Look! Loosen!’ Another in very common use demanded response to the query, ‘Where is your Liberty Bond Button?’ ” On one side of Market street “a platform extended full width of the sidewalk, with rise enough to require an able-bodied though not difficult step . . . and along it was stretched a streamer, proclaiming to the multitude, ‘We must go over the top.’ ”<sup>7</sup> One resident, of German origin, who had not subscribed to the extent his neighbors thought he should, was taunted into making indiscreet remarks, which led to his conviction and imprisonment under the Espionage act. Any man with a foreign accent was suspect. One aged Confederate veteran, who was willing, himself, to reprehend young men for waiting to be conscripted, rather than to volunteer for service, could not resist expressing his resentment over these “wild and wooly rumors with regard to our German-American citizens,” most of whom he contended were entirely dependable.

Chattanooga was merely sharing in a nation-wide hysteria in its exaggerated patriotism, but war had a greater meaning for the town than for most American communities because of its proximity to Fort Oglethorpe and Chickamauga Park. Besides the troops stationed at the post, other regular regiments arrived at the Park early in May, 1917, for training in a camp named after the Confederate leader, Nathan Bedford Forrest. Even before this time, it had been announced that a series of training camps for reserve officers would be held at Fort Oglethorpe, the first of which would open on May 15. A war prison barracks was established for the incarceration of prisoners-of-war and civilian enemy aliens. Camp Greenleaf, which was designated as a training center for men in medical and sanitary units,

<sup>7</sup> Wiltse Manuscript, p. 366.

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was also opened at Chickamauga Park. Eventually, it became the major training center of the sort for the whole army.<sup>8</sup>

Lytle mushroomed as it had done in Spanish-American-war days. Businessmen vied with each other to secure advantageous locations in the "new midway," although the Army itself now provided organized entertainment and post exchanges. To prevent any repetition of the epidemic of the early war period, the City Water Company of Chattanooga hastily laid a main to supply the needs of the cantonments, and a sewerage system was installed.

On September 5, the first group of local men to be called for service under the draft left for Camp Gordon, Georgia. They were escorted to the train by a parade of enthusiastic well-wishers, among whom was a group of Confederate and Union veterans who "marched arm in arm" as though to emphasize the unity the nation had achieved. Two days later, however, a note of dissension was introduced into the community when, for the second time in little more than a year, the local streetcar operators left work and started what, in the minds of most Chattanoogaes, was the most dramatic strike up to that time.

Small unions of skilled workers had been active in Chattanooga in the late 1870's. In the 1886 city directory, five assemblies of the Knights of Labor—four white and one colored—appear under the heading, "Secret Societies." This caption was not unusual, and little

<sup>8</sup> Department of the Army, Special Services, Historical Division, World War I Group: *Order of Battle of the United States Land Forces in the World War* (1917-1919), *Zone of the Interior*, vol. III, part 1. Camp Forrest operated until combined with Fort Oglethorpe in January, 1919. Engineer troops as well as infantry trained there (p. 819). The first officers' training camp, which the men gave the unofficial name of Camp Warden McLean, operated May 15 through August 11, 1917. In the second series, three camps were operated simultaneously from August 27 through November, 1917. In the third series, only one camp was conducted from January 5 to April 19, 1918. (p. 841). The War Prison Barracks continued until the release of prisoners after the end of the war, although all but civilian enemy aliens were transferred to Fort McPherson, Ga., in September, 1918 (p. 841). Camp Greenleaf reached its maximum strength of 2,915 officers and 23,144 enlisted men in September 1918. In December of that year, it was designated as a demobilization center and processed approximately 7,600 men. It was absorbed in the post at Fort Oglethorpe in February, 1919 (p. 825). Some of the facilities of the Central High School and the University of Chattanooga were used by men in training at the Park, and the university had a unit of the Student Army Training Corps in the fall of 1918.



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is known of the organization or activities of these groups. In the following year, the first unions which have continued to exist to modern times appear, in the instance of the ironmolders and typographers. In the next decade, these two pioneer groups were joined by a number of others, and in 1897, when the Central Labor Union was chartered by the American Federation of Labor, sixteen local craft unions were affiliated with it.<sup>9</sup>

General labor relations were apparently good, although occasional strikes and lockouts occurred. In the period of war contracts, the advantage adhered to the workers because of the consistent demand for labor. This gave a new stimulus to union organization and led to some difficulties in the textile industry and with the streetcar company. In the summer of 1916, the first strike of the streetcar operators occurred in an effort to win union recognition. There was no violence when the motormen and conductors abandoned their cars on Market Street, but a large crowd gathered. Most of its members were merely curious observers, but their presence disturbed the police authorities who feared the danger of a riot. One prominent young citizen, on his way home from the tennis court with his racket in his hand, the purpose of which was possibly misunderstood by the officer, was arrested while watching the affair. But the chief interest was created when the commissioner of fire and police ordered the fire department to play a hose upon the assembled crowd. All were thoroughly dampened. The ire of one gentleman who with his wife received a wetting was so aroused that he attempted to secure proper vengeance upon the person of the commissioner himself. Serious trouble was, however, averted, and the strike was brought to an end when the company agreed to a contract, which recognized the union.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> The unions affiliated with the Central Labor Union were: Blacksmiths, Boilermakers, Brewers, Bricklayers, Railway Trainmen, Car inspectors, Cigar-makers, Ironmolders, Locomotive Engineers, Locomotive Firemen, Machinists, Plumbers, Pressmen, Railway Carmen, Stone Cutters, and Typographers. *Chattanooga City Directory*, 1896, pp. 39-40.

In 1916, a labor newspaper, *The Labor World*, was first published under private management. The following year it was purchased by the Central Labor Union and is still the official paper of that organization.

<sup>10</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, August 22, October 6, 1916.

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The difficulties in 1917 arose over a determination on the part of the company to abrogate this settlement. Again a great crowd gathered when news spread that a strike had started. The local authorities this time decided to call for aid, as the country was at war. Since the National Guard of Tennessee had already been sworn into Federal service, the appeal was made directly to the Secretary of War. A telegram was dispatched late in the afternoon of September 7, and by 2 A. M. the next morning a battalion of regular infantry from Fort Oglethorpe arrived in town prepared to maintain order. They were sent to guard strategic points, but when not on duty were held at their town headquarters in the armory building at Fourth and Market Streets. They cooked in an open lot nearby and were, themselves, the center of much curious interest.

The streetcar company attempted to maintain service with strike-breakers and armed guards. This led to a tragic occurrence. A strike sympathizer blocked the tracks on Market Street by parking an automobile across them. The ensuing tie-up caused the officials of the company to send a car, protected by armed guards, to tow the trolleys into the barns, as the operators had been removed by the police as a precautionary measure. When this car reached Eighth and Market Streets, it was met by a crowd of such proportions that it could not continue. The guards used their guns to frighten the throng. All fired into the air but one, and a man standing on the sidewalk was fatally wounded.

More troops were rushed to town. They acted as a sufficient restraining influence to prevent any further recurrence of violence. The strike continued until a group of prominent citizens intervened with the result that a contract was written. The company remained adamant, however, in its refusal to accept the closed shop and to recognize the union. Though some of the men would not accept the settlement, regular schedules were again started and the lines operated without interruption.<sup>11</sup> The streetcar strike was actually more dramatic than it was typical. Labor in every way devoted its full strength in Chattanooga to the effort of winning the war.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*, Sept. 7 through Oct. 6, 1917; *The Labor World*, Sept. 7 through Oct. 12, 1917.

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All during the following year, shortages of fuel, food, and some luxuries made life difficult. Drafted men departed constantly for training amid popular acclaim, which was shared equally by both white and colored. Upward of 10,000 men from the county joined the colors, of whom slightly more than 200 gave their lives.<sup>12</sup>

The health of the men at the camps at Fort Oglethorpe and Chickamauga Park was satisfactory, in contrast with the record of 1898, until the whole country fell victim to the influenza epidemic. In late September, 1918, citizens in the town as well as the soldiers in training were stricken. Health officers and resources could not cope with the rapid spread of the disease. At its peak as many as thirty-eight deaths were reported in one day in the city and surrounding suburbs, while the total cases climbed by October 19 to 5,848. In the camps, thousands suffered. Funeral corteges, bearing the soldiers' bodies, accompanied by bands playing the dead march, were daily reminders of the toll taken. Schools and theaters were closed, while church services and other gatherings were banned. People wore gauze masks when they went out of their homes, and a sign at the public library, which read “Please get your book and hurry away,” testified to the fear which was generally prevalent. After about six weeks, the scourge began to wane.<sup>13</sup>

Shortly after the end of the epidemic, the news of the armistice added to the joy of the people. Bombs fired from the Times Building and the Hotel Patten signaled the word to the community. Although the news was received at 2 A. M., Market Street from Sixth to Ninth was jammed with a milling mass of humanity. Whistles shrieked, bells rang, while shouting and singing were punctured with pistol shots. Business houses remained closed the following day, as the unrestrained celebration continued. Quieter observances, which were

<sup>12</sup> The first local casualty was Charles Loaring-Clark, who was with the British Army before the United States entered the war. Davis King Summers, for whom the local American Legion post for white veterans is named, was the first battle casualty in American service. The local municipal auditorium, the construction of which was started in 1922, is dedicated to those who lost their lives in the war.

<sup>13</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, Sept. 18 through Oct. 29, 1918; Wiltse Manuscript, pp. 373-374. The city Department of Health estimated 10,000 cases of influenza were not reported.



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highlighted by community dinners, marked the return of the Tennessee troops who were demobilized at Fort Oglethorpe after what seemed to be a long period of waiting.

The post-Civil War period was most important to Chattanooga, as it marked the rebirth of the small community. The Spanish-American War gave it an economic lift which assisted in bringing it out of the financial difficulties of the nineties. But there was no comparable circumstance following the First World War, although the citizens had profited from the services they rendered the thousands of troops who trained nearby, and from the war orders which kept factories busy day and night. The adjustment from war to peace passed with no particular dislocation. Nevertheless, Chattanooga, as was generally true of the nation, suffered from a war weariness which caused it to accept the Republican plea for a return to normalcy. For the first time since 1904, the majority of the votes cast in a Presidential election in both city and county went to a Republican candidate in 1920. The Republican majority was increased by the votes from the former James County. This county was formed in 1871 from portions of Hamilton and Bradley. In a referendum held December 11, 1919, the residents of this rural and generally Republican area voted to unite with Hamilton County in a consolidation which was unique in American local government.<sup>14</sup>

Far from the idea of normalcy were the social trends which dominated the following decade. Aided by the spirit of feminine freedom, which accompanied the suffragette victory, by the growing use of the automobile, and more noticeably by a popular break with past mores, the jazz age found its way into the community. Although the traditional conservatism of the region prevented the excesses which characterized this phenomenon in more populous areas, the tempo of life was greatly changed.

National Prohibition, which has been so closely identified with the jazz age, created no new problem in the Chattanooga area as it did in the metropolitan districts of the nation. Georgia and Alabama had state-wide prohibition prior to the war, while the four-mile law

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, December 12, 1919. *The Tennessee Blue Book*, 1947-1948, p. 287, says this was "the first county consolidation in the United States."

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of Tennessee, which prohibited the sale of liquor within four miles of a school, was designed for the same purpose. Nevertheless, residents were rarely hard put to secure a drink. The nearby mountains were the source of a variety of the products of the art of the moonshiners. Their activities led to no bootleggers' or gangsters' wars, as was true in more densely populated sections, but an occasional mountain feud flared up for a somewhat similar reason. Nor were these moonshiners thrown out of business with the repeal of national prohibition. Local option in three states, under which most of the rural counties have chosen to remain dry, even though some of the voters have continued "to drink wet," and high excise taxes have kept the trade of the unlicensed mountain manufacturer open and flourishing.

It was, of course, no new activity. From earliest times in America, wines and distilled liquors were made at home, presumably for use of the maker. But the mountain people have always believed in a minimum of government and have opposed the collection of excise taxes, a stand which has led to continual trouble with the revenue officers. Today, the moonshiners still keep active the spirit of the Whisky Rebellion.

Generally speaking, the Southern highlander is a conservative individual. Passionately attached to his mountain homeland, he holds also to trusted folkways. He has kept alive in this country the ballads and dance tunes of the Scottish borderlands, and has added to them many rich American counterparts. He retains a firm belief in the "old time religion." The early denominations—the Baptists, the Methodists and the Presbyterians—gradually formalized and grew away from the emotionalism of the frontier days. However, in the rural areas, the "jerks" and the use of "unknown tongues" never entirely died out. Although the established denominations continued to be largely fundamentalist in their belief, some groups broke away to form new congregations whose modes of worship were similar to those of an earlier time.

In the Chattanooga area, the beginnings of this movement are evident in the last decades of the 19th Century. It spread to include not only the rural residents but also the working elements of the towns. Although there are several additional small independent or-

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ganizations of the Pentecostal or Holiness group in the area, the principal denominations are known as the Church of God (Tomlinson), Church of God, and the (Original) Church of God.<sup>15</sup> Apparently, the oldest of these is the one which calls itself the Church of God, as the other two distinguished themselves by the parenthetical descriptions in their formal names. It, too, is the one which has grown intellectually to the establishment of its own college.

The annual conventions, which are reminiscent of the old-time camp meeting, bring together people from all over the nation, although the majority are from rural areas of nearby Southern states. Most of them make the trip in trucks or even in farm wagons, which are also used for living quarters. During the convention period, services are held in the headquarters churches, and leaders are selected for the ensuing year. The services follow a general pattern. Healing is practiced, and when the "power [falls] upon the people," some talk in tongues, dance, fall, shout, wring their hands, jump, and jerk. A spirit of joy is pre-eminent among them.<sup>16</sup>

Among the smaller organizations which have sprung up is the Church of God with Signs Following After, started in 1909 near Grass-hopper community in Hamilton County not far from Chattanooga. Its Scriptural origin is in the last verses of the Gospel of Mark: "And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." The members interpret "they shall take up serpents" as a command to handle poisonous snakes in religious services. When a Tennessee statute prohibited snake handling in 1947, they refused to obey, as they insisted they had the right of religious freedom. "Just you wait," one leader stated. "Now hit's handlin' serpents that's agin' the law, but after a while hit'll be against the law to talk in tongues, and they'll go after the Bible itself."

Under the statute, some of them were arrested and brought to court in Chattanooga. One described his experience to a congregation.

<sup>15</sup> The headquarters of the latter are in Chattanooga.

<sup>16</sup> H. A. Tomlinson, ed., *Diary of A. J. Tomlinson*, I, 168.



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“Now, brethering,” he said, “I am an ignorant man. I can’t read nor sign my name. When they arrested me the judge was a-feared to let the serpents come in the courtroom. But *I’ve* handled ’em all my life—been bit four hundred times ’till I’m speckled all over like a guinea hen. But the judge wouldn’t look at ’em! And he was a *learnt* man. . . .” However, the control of the law has at least removed this sensational practice from the newspapers of the day, even though the group from Dolly Pond, another community near Chattanooga, in particular, received national notice before the law’s purpose was accomplished. All of these sects are strangely unorthodox to persons of more conventional conviction, but one writer has commented, “their belief is certainly based on the Bible as they understand it.”<sup>17</sup>

The Tennessee law prohibiting snake handling was not the first statute which affected a religious issue in the local area. The most sensational one, passed March 21, 1925, was an effort to prohibit the teaching of evolution in schools maintained by public funds. Within a short time after the passage of the act, a group sitting in Robinson’s drugstore in Dayton, Tennessee, over their daily Coca-Colas determined upon a test of the law. Their interest was more in calling attention to their community than in the issue involved. John T. Scopes, the young teacher of science in the local high school, pointed to passages in the adopted text, Hunter’s *Civic Biology*, which apparently violated the statute and agreed to become the defendant. Superintendent Walter White of the Rhea County public schools consented to the test case.

What might have remained little more than a minor case buried in court records became an issue of national interest when an enterprising reporter wrote a story about the prospective trial which was used by one of the leading news agencies. Immediately, John Randolph Neal, law school administrator and Tennessee liberal, offered his services to Scopes as did the American Civil Liberties Union. The local Attorney General, A. T. (Tom) Stewart, who had the help of several Dayton lawyers, headed the prosecution. The state counsel invited William Jennings Bryan, the Great Commoner, who had

<sup>17</sup> Archie Robertson, *That Old-Time Religion*, pp. 170, 171, 176.

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become an ardent defender of the fundamentalist religious attitude, to assist in the prosecution.<sup>18</sup> He at once signified his readiness to join them. Bryan's acceptance was noted by Clarence Darrow, famous criminal lawyer and agnostic, who volunteered to assist the defense, Arthur Garfield Hays and Dudley Field Malone participated as the representatives of the Civil Liberties Union. The nature of the case and the distinguished battery of legal lights brought droves of reporters to the scene as the trial opened. Westbrook Pegler, Raymond Clapper, Rex Bell, and H. L. Mencken were among those whose daily reports carried the color and progress of the case to the attention of the nation.

Dayton is a modest, attractive, small community, pleasantly situated in a rolling valley near the foot of Walden's Ridge, approximately forty miles from Chattanooga. In contradistinction to the individuals who promoted the trial, the residents of the nearby area were genuinely interested in the religious issue involved. They thronged to the scene, where they were joined by many curious visitors whose attention had been drawn by the news reports. The local onlookers were particularly attracted by Bryan, with whom they felt a religious kinship, and followed him about the streets, while they avoided his archenemy, Darrow. Colporteurs were on hand to sell Bibles and religious tracts. Itinerant evangelists spoke to street-corner crowds and held evening revivals. Others with more mundane motives hawked hot dogs, lemonade, and peanuts. Street vendors sold miniature monkeys, which children dangled on sticks, while a couple of side-show impresarios exhibited live apes. The motif was picked up by the local shopkeepers, who displayed monkey posters in their windows. The atmosphere of the town was "half a street fair and half a religious revival meeting."

Only a small proportion of the crowd which milled around the court house could jam into the little room when Judge John T. Raulston opened the trial on July 10, 1925. A loud-speaker was erected on the outside of the building so those unable to get in could follow the proceedings. It was oppressively hot and the visiting lawyers, with the single exception of Malone, and the pressmen were pleased to

<sup>18</sup> Paxton Hibben, *The Peerless Leader: William Jennings Bryan*, pp. 389-390.

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follow the informality of the judge and shed their coats. Thus, the famous “galluses” of Darrow received unusual attention, while Bryan’s collarless short-sleeved shirt, which had been designed by his wife, aroused the interest of Mencken to such an extent that he planned to have some made for himself. Palm leaf fans waved incessantly through the day, as the spectators and participants sought relief from the heat. Another phase of the court’s informality is displayed in an account by Mencken. The judge, having failed to see the defendant for a day or so, stopped proceedings to ask of his whereabouts. The mild-mannered young man was discovered, sitting in his shirt sleeves amid the lawyers, expert witnesses, and onlookers, and rose to identify himself, whereupon, according to Mencken, “the uproar was resumed.”

The main portion of the trial was concerned with clashes over procedure and technicalities of testimony, in which the issue was less the guilt of the accused than it was the time-old argument between science and religion. The climax came when Bryan agreed to take the stand for questioning by Darrow as an expert on religion. Because of the heat and the large crowd which assembled, the judge removed the proceedings to the courthouse lawn, where a platform had been erected for the court and the attorneys. The audience sat around on the grass under the trees and stood about on the nearby street.

For two hours Darrow questioned Bryan on the Great Commoner’s interpretation of the Bible. The whole period was marked in heated exchange between the two, in which the onetime political radical ardently defended the conservative, fundamentalist position in religion. The examination was interrupted when Attorney General Stewart rose and insisted that the procedure was illegal. “What is the purpose of this examination?” he protested. Answers came immediately from Bryan and Darrow. “The purpose is to cast ridicule on everybody who believes in the Bible!” Bryan stated, while Darrow earnestly maintained: “We have the purpose of preventing bigots and ignoramuses from controlling the education of the United States! And you know it—and that is all!”

Court adjourned for the day with Bryan still upon the stand. When



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it opened the next morning, Judge Raulston ruled that Bryan's testimony was irrelevant to the case and ordered it stricken from the record. He brought the contending lawyers back to the issue which was over the matter of the teaching of evolution. The defense then determined to waive its right of argument and to depend upon the appellate courts to decide the larger question of freedom of thought involved in the case. The decision deprived Bryan of the opportunity to deliver his summing-up address, on which he had worked for a long time. Scopes was found guilty and was fined \$100 by the judge. Thus the trial ended on July 21.

The press of Chattanooga unanimously dubbed the proceedings as disgraceful. The *Times* placed it in its proper perspective when it stated editorially on July 22: "But with all its unpleasantness the Scopes trial has not been without its compensations. It has aroused more widespread interest in science and religion than anything that has happened in America this century. . . . The trial was, large as it may have loomed in thought and affairs, only an incident in an age-old struggle that will continue so long as there are men who think for themselves and men who let others think for them. . . ."

An appeal was heard by the Supreme Court of the state the following September. The majority held the act, itself, was constitutional, but reversed the verdict on the grounds that the jury and not the judge should have assessed the punishment. In his decision the chief justice, realizing that the exaggerated nature of the trial at Dayton had not been helpful, stated: "The Court is informed that the plaintiff in error is no longer in the service of the State. We see nothing to be gained by prolonging the life of this bizarre case. On the contrary, we think that the peace and dignity of the state, which all criminal prosecutions are brought to redress, will be better preserved by the entry of the *nolle prosequi* herein. Such a course is suggested to the Attorney General."<sup>19</sup>

While the Dayton assemblage was breaking up, Bryan, believing

<sup>19</sup> *Tennessee Reports*, CLIV, 121. The law still remains upon the statute books of the state, although no effort is made to enforce it. In reconstructing this account of the Dayton trial, in addition to the Chattanooga newspapers, the following books were used: C. Darrow, *The Story of My Life*; Hibben, *op. cit.*; H. L. Mencken, *Heathen Days*; 1890-1936; Robertson, *op. cit.*

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his undelivered address to be “the mountain peak of my life’s effort,” as he termed it, went to Chattanooga and arranged for its publication as a pamphlet. Tired as he was, he also made a visit to the home of Judge Raulston at Winchester, where he delivered an address. On his return, he spoke to an assembled crowd at Cowan from the rear platform of his train in a fashion reminiscent of his Presidential campaigns. The next day at Dayton, he died suddenly while taking an afternoon nap.<sup>20</sup>

While engaged at Dayton, most of the celebrities spent the week ends at Chattanooga, where they were widely entertained by what Mencken has termed the “civilized minority,” which he admitted was in the same proportion there as in other cities. Darrow lectured to a large audience on Tolstoy, one of his favorite subjects. But everyday matters were not long subordinated to the excitement attending the trial and the reverberations it had over the nation. In some respects, it was but a high point of the frivolous twenties and did not turn attention from the psychology of prosperity which influenced Chattanooga as it did the whole country.

It was a period of expansion. Led by the *Chattanooga News*, then edited by the younger George Fort Milton, and the Chamber of Commerce, a campaign was launched to extend the city limits, with the result that a number of contiguous suburban areas were incorporated into Chattanooga proper in 1929. As in earlier days, real estate promoters turned to Lookout Mountain which had grown more accessible because of the automobile and therefore desirable for year-around living. A small hotel, the Fairyland Inn, was constructed, and for the amusement of its patrons, the owner, Garnet Carter, devised an outdoor miniature golf course. Although planned originally for children, Tom Thumb golf immediately became popular with adults as well, and within a short time spread throughout the country.

Soon after the opening of the Fairyland Inn, a second and more elaborate hotel was planned for Lookout Mountain. To finance it, bonds were sold through Caldwell and Company, a Nashville concern

<sup>20</sup> In his speech at Winchester, he had said, “When a Christian wants to teach Christianity, he has to build his own college. . . .” His admirers at Dayton seized upon this idea and raised the funds for the creation of William Jennings Bryan University as a memorial to him at the scene of the trial.

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which had grown in a few short years to become the largest investment house up to this time in the South. The Lookout Mountain Hotel was opened in June, 1928, with a gala affair at which Paul Whiteman's orchestra was a major attraction. But like many an optimistic enterprise of its kind, it was not able to sustain the shock of the Great Depression.<sup>21</sup>

The headlong plunge of the nation's economy into the trough of depression seriously affected the whole community, as long established business concerns were forced to close their doors. Chattanooga's situation, however, was helped to a degree by the diversification of its industry, but even this did little to relieve the general feeling of despondency evident there as over the nation. In the early spring of 1933, the residents in the area eagerly looked forward to the inauguration of Franklin D. Roosevelt, whom they had supported at the polls with a large majority. However, troubled days were still ahead, as the Chattanooga National Bank, which had succeeded the old First National, failed.

Roosevelt's task of providing relief and recovery was also accompanied by a third "r," reform. One of the first New Deal proposals called for the development of the Tennessee Valley, which, although inaugurated amid serious opposition, offered a new outlet for many of the residents. TVA construction along with PWA, WPA, and CCC programs provided relief and an opportunity for economic recovery. In the meantime, an area situation had again seized national attention, as the sensational story of the Scottsboro case was detailed by the press.

Back in March, 1931, a long freight train left Chattanooga. In one of the gondola cars, partly filled with gravel, two girls clad in overalls and a group of boys had hopped a ride. The girls were unemployed millhands who had spent the previous night in a "hobo jungle" just

<sup>21</sup> This was one of the few Chattanooga enterprises financed through Caldwell and Company. The crash of the company's pyramided activities in 1930 greatly intensified the crisis throughout the whole Southeast. J. B. McFerrin, *Caldwell & Company*, pp. 21, 179.

After several refinancing operations, including one tax sale for less than \$100,000, although the original bond issue alone was \$650,000, the hotel was reopened in 1936, but closed finally in 1960. Pound, *op. cit.*, pp. 162-165.



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outside Chattanooga with very questionable company. After the train passed through Stevenson, Alabama, those in the open freight car were joined by a crowd of Negroes who were also taking a free ride. A fight followed and the larger number of blacks chased the white men off the train, except for one, who fell between the cars and was pulled back aboard to save him from possible death or injury. One of the angry victims telephoned ahead to the sheriff at the little town of Paint Rock, Alabama, told him of the fight, and asked that he arrest the Negroes.

When the train arrived at Paint Rock, the sheriff and a posse were on hand. The Negro group, which had diminished to nine, were arrested and taken to the jail at Scottsboro. Then it was that the girls claimed they had been raped by the Negroes. Alert officers had the girls examined by physicians within an hour after the alleged crime.

The sordid case was first heard at Scottsboro within two weeks under the protection of the National Guard, as the temper of the local population was highly aroused. Eight of the defendants who ranged in age from fourteen to twenty-one years, were quickly convicted, while the case against the ninth, the youngest, was declared a mistrial when the jury failed to agree on his punishment. At this time, the defense counsel was headed by Stephen R. Roddy, a Chattanooga lawyer. With the assistance of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Commission on Inter-racial Cooperation, and some other similarly interested bodies, an appeal was prepared to the Supreme Court of Alabama. Plans were made to enlist distinguished Southern lawyers and Clarence Darrow agreed to join the defense. While these negotiations were in progress, Communists took up the cause of the Negroes and brought the International Labor Defense into the case. By one means or another, the Communists proceeded to drive all previously interested parties out. Almost immediately the fate of the unfortunate defendants became subordinated to the attempted use of the case for propaganda.<sup>22</sup>

The ILD employed a Chattanooga lawyer, George W. Chamlee, and brought the distinguished New York attorney, Samuel S. Lei-

<sup>22</sup> Walter White, “The Negro and the Communists,” *Harper's Magazine*, CLXIV, 62-72.

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bowitz, to head the defense. Neither of these men was in sympathy with the philosophy or methods of communism, but, as Leibowitz said, "looked at the case merely through the eyes of a trial lawyer." The proceedings dragged on for years, with the Alabama courts upholding the verdict of guilty, with the single exception of the instance when Judge James E. Horton, who won the ungrudging admiration of Leibowitz for his fairness and legal competence, set aside one such verdict, stating that it was not supported by the evidence. Twice the case reached the Supreme Court of the United States and each time the verdicts were set aside and new trials ordered.

All the while the Communists made exaggerated claims of "legal lynching," and in other ways used the case for propaganda purposes. They hoped to make martyrs of the "Scottsboro boys." Actually, the prosecution had little case. The physicians who examined the girls testified that they found no physical or emotional signs of rape. One of the girls, herself, later repudiated the testimony she gave at the first trial. But aroused prejudice among the local population and throughout the South played into the hands of the skilled propaganda technicians of the Communists. Leibowitz became suspicious of the group who had brought him into the case, and in late 1934 told newspaper correspondents, "Until all secret maneuvering, ballyhoo, mass pressure and Communist methods are removed from the case, I can no longer continue."<sup>23</sup>

Only one of the defendants chose to have the ILD continue to serve him, so the more conservative groups re-entered the case. Finally the state of Alabama, sick of the disrepute that the "*shabby cause célèbre*" was giving it, dropped the charge of rape against five of the defendants. Of those who were imprisoned all but one was later paroled, and he escaped from prison. When the news of the surprising compromise was announced in the courtroom at Decatur, Alabama, to which the trials had been transferred on July 24, 1937, excitement had subsided locally. The Associated Press account reflects this: "The scene in Saturday's courtroom was in sharp contrast with that . . . in April, 1931, when the Negroes were first called into court. At Scottsboro, National Guardsmen with drawn bayonets en-

<sup>23</sup> Quentin Reynolds, *Courtroom*, pp. 286-287.

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circled the courthouse, and hundreds of persons jammed into the courtroom to hear testimony. The courtroom here was not filled at any time during this series of trials, and no troops were about.”<sup>24</sup>

Thus the Scottsboro incident closed, although the effects lingered in its wake. Leibowitz’s courtroom conduct contributed to the feeling of prejudice and renewed insistence on the right of the states to control their own affairs. His argument that the right of the Negro to service on juries was his constitutional due had influence, however, on the changing aspects of the status of the Negro in the South.

Chattanooga received little attention in the Scottsboro case, yet two of the lawyers and four of the defendants were from the city. Some of the parents of the local boys were used to exploit the case for the Communists. The unfortunate hobo ride began there. As in the instance of the Dayton trial, adverse publicity, however, did not include the city, which stands virtually midway between the scenes of the two trials.

Horizons in the South, rightly or wrongly, are bounded by heritages of the Civil War and Reconstruction. In some areas, they are more narrow than others and are affirmed most strongly when issues which include them arise. Chattanooga was fortunate. In its cosmopolitan population, there were elements whose sympathies were attached to either side in these controversies. But those who stood against the effort to restrict the freedom of teaching, which was the issue at Dayton, and those who realized that emotion rather than prejudice lay too largely at the basis of the Scottsboro circumstance, also understood that those of opposite views were not always the ignoramuses or bestial criers for blood that they were so frequently represented to be. The latter were essentially good, everyday people who ordinarily made good citizens. They possessed much native ability, although its potentialities were not fully realized because of lack of opportunity and training.

Emotion and prejudice are not the exclusive possession of any one area or region. For many generations the South has been faced by problems, social and economic, which can only be solved slowly. Chattanoogaans, whether of Northern or Southern origin, living in the

<sup>24</sup> *Chattanooga News*, July 24, 1937.



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midst of these circumstances, as they do, believe that progress toward solution is being made. Whether angered or troubled by such resurgencies as those at Dayton and Scottsboro, the majority recognize them for what they are, resurgencies.

The most difficult thing for residents of other areas to realize is the contradictory fact about the South. The use of the "Solid South" to categorize the region has led to great and unfortunate misunderstanding. The South is no more "solid," actually, than any other portion of the nation. Though generally reluctant to advance in the matter of civil liberties for Negroes as rapidly as some other regions wish, there are nevertheless many Southern organizations and individuals who work steadfastly and unabatedly to accomplish that purpose. Though the general pattern is an agricultural economy, such wholly industrialized communities as Birmingham, Chattanooga, and Knoxville, and a great number of purely resort towns, demonstrate the error of labeling the South wholly the one thing or another. Even in the matter of dialect, Southern ears, at least, are able to distinguish variations.

In political views, the same contradiction of solidarity is markedly evident. Although victory for high office may be a virtual Democratic certainty, the differences within the party are almost as strong as those between parties in other sections. This was clearly displayed in the spectacular campaign of 1948 when a progressive Chattanooga challenged the organization of E. H. (Ed) Crump, the Memphis boss, who, for a generation, had practically dominated Tennessee politics. Crump was not pleased when Estes Kefauver entered the senatorial race that year. Kefauver had represented the Chattanooga district in Congress for nearly ten years and was recognized, both within and without the state, as a constructive liberal. His book, *Twentieth Century Congress*, revealed his acceptance of the fact that changing times require modification in institutions. Crump, in typical fashion, attacked Kefauver in a series of full-page advertisements which appeared in the principal papers of the state. He said that Kefauver reminded him of a pet coon in a drawer, who turned his head to distract attention from what his paws were doing. Kefauver seized the opportunity Crump had given him. He secured an old

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coonskin cap with a tail which hung down the back. It was reminiscent of the independent, frontier politician, a fact which he made evident when he pointed out to the assembled crowds that it came from a genuine Tennessee coon, “whose rings were in its tail, not in its nose.” His opponent in the race was A. T. Stewart, the onetime prosecutor of Scopes at Dayton. The result was a smashing victory for Kefauver.

Chattanooga was fortunate in having a heterogeneous population which had continuous contact with all parts of the nation. In the early years of the twentieth century, the city, although it could claim little more than 30,000 people, had three legitimate theaters operating simultaneously. Individuals of national and international fame played their celebrated roles or delighted eager audiences with favorite musical renditions. But more important to the community eventually was the re-establishment of the undergraduate college at the university in 1904. Soon this institution became a self-perpetuating private college and joined with numerous local groups to pioneer in the cultural arts. As its interests broadened in the administration of President Alexander Guerry, in particular, the university developed a most harmonious relationship with the city and its environs. Here was no struggle between town and gown, but a venture in mutual assistance.

One of the most tangible evidences of this association is the unique experiment of bringing together in one building the public library of the community and the library of the university. Although administered separately, the facilities of the two are available in a single location to users of every type, as the city library is open to Negro citizens. In the Tennessee Room of the public library, the books of the growing list of writers from the city and the nearby area are available. They represent work in a variety of fields, including fiction, biography, history, children's books, and poetry.

Chattanooga now has two active musical organizations, which use local artists for their performances. They are a combined symphony orchestra and civic chorus, and an opera association which produces grand opera. Other than Roland Hayes, the best known of its musical performers in the outside world were Oscar Seagle, noted baritone, and Grace Moore, who delighted audiences universally by her acting

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and singing. A little theater group now takes the place of the onetime road companies for enthusiastic patrons, while an art association brings shows to its gallery and encourages young artists. Furthermore, many additional attractions are brought to Chattanooga, either by their own initiative or under the sponsorship of some local source.

These cultural activities have grown in importance with the advance of the twentieth century and are unquestionably presages of future development. It was these accomplishments which were noted by John Gunther, distinguished American journalist, and caused him to say in his brief remarks about Chattanooga that it has a "genuine social and intellectual distinction. . . ." <sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> John Gunther, *Inside U. S. A.*, p. 760.



## CHAPTER XX

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### TVA

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MORE than the usual holiday spirit was prevalent in Chattanooga on Labor Day, 1940. Thousands of visitors, from one end of the Tennessee Valley to the other, were present to participate in the festivities attending the dedication of the newly finished Chickamauga Dam. As befitted the national implications of the occasion, President Franklin D. Roosevelt was on hand to deliver the dedicatory address. Standing on a platform, not many miles from the spot where De Soto and his men had rested for the night four centuries before, the President spoke to a national radio audience as well as to the throng in attendance. "This Chickamauga dam," he said, "the sixth in the series of mammoth structures built by the Tennessee Valley Authority for the people of the United States, is helping to give all of us human control of the watershed of the Tennessee River in order that it may serve in full the purpose of men."

He used the phrase, "the Great Lakes of the South," to designate the bodies of water impounded by the dams. As much of the world was then at war, he noted the value of the projects in the event this country became involved. But in his dedicatory statement he came back to permanent values: "I, therefore, today on this very happy occasion dedicate this dam and these lakes to the benefit of all the people, the prosperity they have stimulated, the hope they have inspired, the hearts that they encourage. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, September 3, 1940.

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For those who knew the valley's history, the occasion was indeed a happy one, as it signified both the end of an old struggle and the opening of a new era. Ever since white men settled in the valley of the unmanageable Tennessee, they had sought to improve it as a waterway so as to unchain themselves from the isolation of the area blocked by the rough passages below Chattanooga and at Muscle Shoals. Unable to accomplish such a gigantic task themselves, they sought the aid of the national Government. President Monroe and Secretary of War Calhoun had first recommended to the Congress that the Tennessee be improved at Muscle Shoals as a part of a national program of roads and waterways. This led to indirect aid for the construction of the early Muscle Shoals canal.

However, the canal proved insufficient, and the need for further assistance was repeatedly affirmed in resolutions sent to Congress from meetings in the towns of the valley. Immediately after the close of the Civil War, river conventions again insisted upon the national importance of the stream. Help was forthcoming, but it was in the form of small pork-barrel appropriations, which were inadequate and were unsystematically spent, with the result that the Tennessee continued to harass those who used it.

Near the close of the nineteenth century the unflagging efforts of residents of the valley for the improvement of the river began to take on new facets of interest. The emphasis was still on navigation, but the value of river transportation was increased by the effect its competition could have on railroad freight rates. The Tennessee River Improvement Association, which was organized in 1898, was the crystallization of this effort. Chattanooga was the principal influence in its creation. It brought together representatives of the communities of the "drainage area of the Tennessee" and others interested in the commercial development of the region. The purpose of the association was: "(1) to assist in all proper ways in procuring as soon as possible the complete improvement of the Tennessee River as a means of transportation, and in securing its use for that purpose and its further utilization in any manner, not inconsistent with that use, which may contribute to the general welfare; and (2) to all practicable plans for conservation of its volume and regulation of its

flow; and (3) to cooperate, upon any proper occasion, in any meritorious movements or plan or project for similar improvement or use or utilization of any waterway within the United States of America."<sup>2</sup> Despite the apparent unity of purpose in this expression from the association, the competition among the states and districts of the area for their share of pork barrel legislation tended to defeat the idea of the improvement of the whole river.

The association met annually, and the guiding spirit for the major portion of its existence was John A. Patten. This public-spirited citizen had come to Chattanooga as a lad. His principal business activity was as managing director, later president, of the Chattanooga Medicine Company. He was president of three packet lines operating on the river, and in the "last great days of the steamboat era" was the "dominating river spirit of the whole Tennessee Valley." The steamboat which bore his name was perhaps the most luxurious to run upon the river up to its time and kept before the people of the valley the evidence of Patten's continued interest.

The River Improvement Association had a strong champion in Washington in Congressman John A. Moon. Moon became a Chattanooga resident in 1874 and though only nineteen years old engaged in the practice of law. In the early 1890's he was chosen circuit court judge, a position he held until elected as a Democrat to Congress in 1896.<sup>3</sup>

One of Moon's chief interests was the improvement of the Tennessee River, which, however, he maintained, could only be logically accomplished by systematic planning for the whole stream.<sup>4</sup> Since the possibilities of hydroelectric power had begun to attract

<sup>2</sup> *Bylaws of the Tennessee River Improvement Association*, manuscript copy in the John A. Patten papers.

<sup>3</sup> A. M. Moon, and J. Phillips, *John A. Moon, Father of the Parcel Post*, pp. 20-34. Judge Moon considered his greatest achievement as a congressman the successful enactment of legislation creating the parcel post in 1913, but the *Chattanooga Times* in 1906 remarked that "no real progress had been made in Tennessee River improvement until he came to Congress."

<sup>4</sup> The National Waterways Commission in 1907 in a policy statement said: "... the growing necessity of securing for human needs the maximum beneficial use of the waters of every stream [will make it] increasingly necessary to treat every stream with all its tributaries as a unit." R. L. Duffus, *The Valley and Its People*, p. 48.



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some pioneers to the use of the river for that purpose, a new and complex factor was added to consideration of the stream's improvement. Many held that power rights should be generously awarded to anyone who would undertake the development of them. In 1899, one bill which granted such privileges at Muscle Shoals to a group of individuals was passed, but for some reason the project was never started.

Judge Moon did not agree with this principle. He insisted that municipalities should be given "exclusive opportunity" to utilize the power developed at dams in navigable streams, and only if they did not wish to undertake such ventures should corporations and individuals be allowed to compete for them.<sup>5</sup> This advanced thinking, which stressed the necessity of guarding the public interest, was not entirely acceptable to his constituents, but the possibility of improving navigation and acquiring hydroelectric power at the same time was enthusiastically endorsed. Moon, consequently, introduced a bill in 1902 for the construction of a dam below Chattanooga, but in a letter to the Chamber of Commerce stated: "When the work is done, Chattanooga ought to have the benefits of the water to generate power to furnish her light and run at a nominal cost the machinery of her factories, etc. If the privilege goes to private companies, it ought to be after the municipalities have refused it, and then for an adequate consideration."<sup>6</sup> The Chamber of Commerce gave its tacit approval to the provision which Moon insisted upon, but was not convinced of the wisdom of city participation. However, the bill was never enacted.

In 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt placed his support behind the philosophy stated by Moon, when he vetoed a second act to give away the power rights at Muscle Shoals. In his message, he stated: "I think it is desirable that the entire subject of granting privileges of the kind referred to in this bill should be considered in a comprehensive way and that a general policy appropriate to the new condi-

<sup>5</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, March 24, 1902, which carries a transcript of testimony before the Congressional Rivers and Harbors Committee.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, March 27, 1902, reproduces a letter of March 25, from John A. Moon to Newell Sanders, president, and John A. Patten, secretary, of the Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce.

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tions caused by the advance in the electrical science should be adopted under which these valuable rights will not be practically given away, but will be disposed of after full competition in such a way as shall best conserve the public interests.”<sup>7</sup>

In this period a young engineer of Chattanooga, Josephus C. Guild, became interested in a plan drawn by Major Dan C. Kingman, who was in charge of the local office of the Army Engineers, to control the treacherous waters of the mountain gorge below Chattanooga. Guild was a native of Nashville, who had moved to Chattanooga in the mid-eighties. His professional interests in geology, metallurgy, and engineering, made him cognizant of natural resources of all types and an enthusiastic supporter of the dawning electrical age. He frequently discussed the engineering problems of river control with his friend, Major Kingman, who feared that the dam he had planned would never be completed for want of Congressional appropriations. Almost as a matter of impulse one day, Guild offered to undertake the project if he could have the power rights.

To secure the necessary financial support, Guild turned to Charles E. James who was always interested in the promotion of Chattanooga enterprises and had entree to wealthy circles in the East. James agreed to join the enthusiastic Guild. Before any negotiations could be made, however, enabling legislation had to be passed by the Congress.

Moon introduced a bill in 1904 which included his favorite stipulation. It provided for the construction of a dam in the mountain section of the river, which was to be built according to the design of the Army Engineers for the dual purpose of the improvement of navigation and the generation of electricity. Cost of construction was to be borne by the recipient of the power franchise, which was to run for ninety-nine years. Only the lock gates and machinery were to be provided by the Federal Government, which, however, was to hold title to the dam. An option was given the city of Chattanooga to undertake the project, but should it fail within four months to accept the privilege, the franchise went to Guild and James. If they

<sup>7</sup> J. D. Richardson, comp., *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, XV, 6777-6778.

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in turn did not accept the opportunity the Secretary of War was directed to negotiate with other parties.<sup>8</sup>

The date the bill became law, April 27, 1904, was heralded as the start of a "new epoch in Chattanooga history." However, much remained to be accomplished. The city authorities, although expressing great interest in every phase of the project, felt that the community could not finance such a tremendous undertaking and quickly declined the option.<sup>9</sup> James, in the meantime, approached Anthony N. Brady, New York financier who had large interests in electrical utilities, to secure his support. Brady decided to investigate the project and sent his son, Nicholas, and Thomas E. Murray, an experienced utility executive, to Chattanooga.

It was natural that Guild and James were eager to make a good impression. After pointing out the possible market for power in Chattanooga, they took their guests down the river in a launch to the site of the dam. Jo Conn Guild, Jr., then a boy of sixteen, was allowed to accompany them, although he was warned not to interfere in any way with the discussions. He carried a rifle with him, although its use was forbidden by his father. Nicholas Brady, only a year or so out of college and possibly feeling a kinship for the boy sitting by himself in the bow of the launch, went forward to make conversation. He soon picked up the rifle, but was told by the younger Guild of his father's prohibition of its use. Brady replied that he did not believe it would be amiss if he shot it. Soon, Murray's attention was diverted from the discussion of the river by the target practice, and moved forward himself, leaving the Chattanoogaans disturbed by his apparent disinterest. Although inexperienced with arms, Murray soon proved himself a natural marksman and delighted in his ability at the new sport. He ignored every effort of the promoters to draw his attention back to the reason for his visit. But late in the afternoon, after much importuning, he abruptly signified his intention of recommending to the elder Brady that he finance the construction.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, April 28, 1904.

<sup>9</sup> *City of Chattanooga, Board of Aldermen, Minutes*, Oct. 14, 1901-Dec. 19, 1910, pp. 200-204. A committee was appointed by the mayor on May 16 to study the project. It returned an adverse report which was accepted by the board June 6, 1904.

<sup>10</sup> Conversation of the authors with J. C. Guild, Jr.



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Work was begun in 1905 by the Chattanooga and Tennessee River Power Company, which was organized by Brady, James, and Guild. Progress was very slow because of difficulties created by the limestone formation on which the dam had to be built. It was not until 1913 that the project, located thirty-three miles from Chattanooga by river and known as the Hale's Bar Lock and Dam, was completed.<sup>11</sup> On November 13th of that year, an elaborate celebration marked the throwing of the power switch. The year before, hydro-electric power had been brought to Chattanooga from a dam constructed on the Ocoee River, a mountain tributary of the Tennessee, by a competing company.<sup>12</sup> With these new sources of electrical energy, the city took renewed pride in the slogan, the "Dynamo of Dixie."

Those whose interest was in the river for navigation use were just as enthusiastic about the completion of the dam at Hale's Bar as were the power promoters. The waters impounded drowned out the Suck, the Pot, and the Skillet, which since the time of the earliest pioneers had been dreaded by navigators almost as much as Muscle Shoals. Now the slack waters permitted shipping to move easily through the mountain sections. No longer could the roar of the Tumbling Shoals be heard on the mountain tops. All of this was noted by the members of the Tennessee River Improvement Association who were present at the celebration. At their annual convention, held at Sheffield, Alabama, they heard their president, John A. Patten, interpret its meaning. He stated:

Our delegates saw yesterday the forty-mile slack-water pool above Hale's Bar—the first great proof that removal by submergence is the right way, the only way to remove completely, effectively, permanently and cheaply,

<sup>11</sup> *Chattanooga News*, November 13, 1913. The original site for the dam was at Scott's Point, but by Congressional action of January 7, 1905, it was changed to Hale's Bar. The first estimates of cost were \$3,000,000, but the 1,200-foot dam actually cost more than \$10,000,000. In the course of construction, the elder Guild died and his son soon assumed an active role in the project.

<sup>12</sup> The Ocoee project was promoted by J. W. Adams, prominent Chattanooga contractor, and associates. The dam was constructed by E. W. Clark and Company, of Philadelphia, who owned the Chattanooga Railway and Light Company, the local electrical utility, and Drexel and Company. These interests merged with those of Brady in the 1920's to form the Tennessee Electric Power Company.

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the few great obstructions still remaining to the proper navigation of this river. Of these obstructions, we may truthfully say that they are few, and that the greatest of them is the Muscle Shoals, including, I fear, the Muscle Shoals canal. But if the best way to deal with Muscle Shoals is to drown the canal, why not drown it? What proper part should sentiment or pride or prejudice or false economy play in such a business? Some of us yesterday sailed over and past drowned farms, good rich bottom land. And none of us, not even the men who owned the farms, is the worse for it.<sup>13</sup>

The example of the Hale's Bar project gave new impetus to those who were interested in a hydroelectric development at Muscle Shoals. It was not, however, until the selection of that site by President Wilson in 1917 for the generation of power and the manufacture of nitrates, that any concrete action was taken. The President's choice was made in accordance with the National Defense Act of 1916, which included two specific provisions: the first was that the plants constructed should be owned and operated "solely by the Government," and, second, should be converted to the manufacture of fertilizer after the emergency.

The construction of Wilson Dam was begun in 1917, but was not completed until too late to be used in the First World War. As soon as the war was over, it became a national political issue which persisted for the following fourteen years. In this period, more than a hundred Muscle Shoals bills were introduced in the Congress. Some were for the disposal or lease of the properties to private parties, including the bids of Henry Ford, while others called for governmental operations of the facilities and further improvement of the river. The most active advocate in Congress of the latter principle was Senator George W. Norris of Nebraska, whose original interest in Muscle Shoals was aroused when the bills affecting it were placed in the jurisdiction of the Senate Committee on Agriculture of which he was chairman.

Norris' interest grew as the Muscle Shoals controversy mounted. He had long been convinced that the river valleys of the Nation should be considered as units, in which the "questions of flood con-

<sup>13</sup> Presidential address delivered to the annual convention of the Tennessee River Improvement Association, November 14, 1913, of which both a printed and a manuscript copy are in the John A. Patten papers.

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trol, navigation, generation of electricity, and development of irrigation [were] inseparably linked. . . ."<sup>14</sup> From a farm state, he was attracted by the possibility of cheap fertilizer at Muscle Shoals, but the main battle ultimately turned on the question of private versus public power.

The early legislation by Norris called for the comprehensive development of the whole Tennessee valley, but in an effort to get the Muscle Shoals facilities into operation by the Federal Government, he became willing to compromise. Two bills for this purpose were passed by the Congress only to be vetoed by Presidents Coolidge and Hoover. In this legislative give and take, Norris had the opportunity to learn for himself and to dramatize for the citizens of the country generally the possibilities and the values contained in the concept of the total development of a river system.<sup>15</sup> The most important of those whose attention was seized by the struggle was Franklin D. Roosevelt. Between his election and inauguration, Roosevelt invited Norris with the Alabama and Tennessee senators to accompany him on a trip to the area, as he was eager to see the Tennessee River project on the ground. In their discussions, Norris realized that he was nearing victory.<sup>16</sup>

On April 10, 1933, President Roosevelt suggested to Congress the creation of the Tennessee Valley Authority in the form of "a corporation clothed with the power of government but possessed of the flexibility and initiative of a private enterprise" to develop the combined resources of the valley. The *Chattanooga Times* on the same day stated that the President's message "should fire the imagination" of all Chattanoogaans. A day later the editor continued to state his approval and quoted a sentence of the message: "This in a true sense is a return to the spirit and vision of the pioneer." Not only were the

<sup>14</sup> G. W. Norris, *Fighting Liberal*, p. 248.

<sup>15</sup> The Army Engineers in 1930 presented the report of their most comprehensive survey of the Tennessee River system and recommended its multipurpose development. *Tennessee River and Tributaries, North Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama, and Kentucky*, 71st Congress, 2nd session, House Document 328.

<sup>16</sup> Alfred Lief, *Democracy's Norris*, pp. 405-406. For a discussion of this phase of Norris' career, in addition to Lief, see Norris, *Fighting Liberal*; J. S. Ransmeier, *The Tennessee Valley Authority*, Chapter II; and Davidson, *The Tennessee: The New River: Civil War to TVA*, Chapter XI.



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local opportunities featured in these accounts, but it was also claimed that the comprehensive plan would benefit the "entire Southland." However, it was soon pointed out that there was some opposition to Government construction of transmission lines.

When the bill was signed on May 18, the two Chattanooga newspapers presented differing points of view about its merits. The *News* wholeheartedly approved the action. "Whistles might well blow," and the people of the valley rejoice, its editor stated. The act would originate "a great experiment, whose social implications will be of interest to many nations." The *Times*, on the other hand, viewed the enactment of the measure with a note of caution: "The old order of individual initiative and private enterprise will not henceforth wholly occupy the field. There will also be present in this valley a distinctly socialistic order promoted and directed at Washington." However, within a few days, the *Times* pointed out that both the cities and the rural areas of the valley would benefit if they would "seize the opportunity."

The preamble to the act creating the TVA states that it is: "To improve the navigability and to provide for the flood control of the Tennessee River; to provide for reforestation and the proper use of marginal lands in the Tennessee Valley; to provide for the agricultural and industrial development of said valley; to provide for the national defense by the creation of a corporation for the operation of Government properties at and near Muscle Shoals in the State of Alabama, and for other purposes."

The Authority, which was to be managed by a board of three directors, was made responsible for the unified development of the river, its tributaries, and the whole watershed area. TVA was given the right of eminent domain to acquire property. A series of dams was to be built, which would control floods and provide a navigable channel. In association with these purposes, hydroelectric power was to be generated. It was also empowered to construct transmission lines and to sell all power surplus to its own use, with local governmental units and co-operatives as preferred buyers. The facilities at Muscle Shoals were to be used for research, experimentation, and the manufacture of fertilizer. To make full realization of the program possible, the act authorized the inclusion of "such ad-

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joining territory as may be related to or materially affected by the development consequent to this Act." It further provided for study and experimentation, "all for the general purpose of fostering an orderly and proper physical, economic and social development of said areas."

For future growth, the act stated that the President should recommend to the Congress "such legislation as he deems necessary" to make possible: "(1) The maximum amount of flood control; (2) the maximum development of said Tennessee River for navigation purposes; (3) the maximum generation of electric power consistent with flood control and navigation; (4) the proper use of marginal lands; (5) the proper method of reforestation of all lands in said drainage basin suitable for reforestation; and (6) the economic and social well-being of the people living in said river basin."<sup>17</sup>

This was an experiment in American governmental administration, inasmuch as for the first time a planning agency was established under Federal authority to develop a region irrespective of state lines. In its essentials it was:

—"a federal autonomous agency, with authority to make its decisions in the region

—responsibility to deal with resources, as a unified whole, clearly fixed in the regional agency, not divided among several centralized federal agencies

—a policy, fixed by law, that the federal regional agency work co-operatively with and through local and state agencies."<sup>18</sup>

Thus TVA's administration was removed from the usual departmental limitations and reported directly to the President and Congress. Its autonomy was carefully protected in order that it might be, as Lister Hill, then Congressman and later Senator from Alabama, stated in 1933: "... free of some of the Government red tape, about

<sup>17</sup> *U. S. Statutes at Large*, XLVIII, part 1 (Public Laws), 58-72.

<sup>18</sup> David Lilienthal, *TVA—Democracy on the March*, p. 153.

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which we complain, which would give authority commensurate with its responsibilities. We made certain that it could not 'pass the buck' to another bureau or department in the event of failure, and that it would not be required to waste time and energy in jurisdictional disputes. It was intended that the Board alone be held responsible for the effective administration of the policy laid down by Congress."<sup>19</sup> The directors possessed the power to use the customary employment methods of private industry,<sup>20</sup> and, also in contradistinction to usual governmental practice, was given the right to plan and construct, itself, the facilities necessary to its operation. Thus, it was not only given fixed and complete responsibility, but it was also protected as carefully as possible against political opportunism. It was to work in co-operation with local groups, for, as the Authority, itself, stated: "The planning of the Valley's future must be the democratic labor of many agencies and individuals, and final success is as much a matter of general initiative as of general consent."<sup>21</sup>

The task outlined was not only new; it was one which caught and stimulated imagination wherever men heard of it. TVA, the Englishman Julian Huxley stated, is "the symbol of a new possibility for the democratic countries—the possibility of obtaining the efficiency of a co-ordinated plan without totalitarian regimentation." Odette Keun, of France, said it "was an effort comparable . . . to the admirable performance of the Scandinavian nations . . . an effort to . . . adjust capitalism to the present realities."<sup>22</sup>

To administer such a huge conception the directors were carefully chosen. Arthur E. Morgan, hydraulic engineer and president of Antioch College, who had wide experience with flood control pro-

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 173-174.

<sup>20</sup> This control of employment has proved one of the most effective factors in the efficient operation of TVA, yet the practice has not been generally adopted. Lilienthal stated in 1944, that "TVA is the *only* permanent federal agency that remains solely responsible for the selection and promotion of its personnel." *Ibid.*, p. 173.

<sup>21</sup> *Annual Report of the Tennessee Valley Authority*, 1936, p. 2. For a full and scholarly discussion of the co-operation of the TVA with local formal and informal groups, see Philip Selznik, *TVA and the Grass Roots*.

<sup>22</sup> Julian Huxley, *TVA: Adventure in Planning*, p. 7; Odette Keun, *A Foreigner Looks at the TVA*, p. 3.



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jects, Harcourt A. Morgan, agricultural specialist and president of the University of Tennessee, and David E. Lilienthal, lawyer and member of the Wisconsin Public Service Commission, comprised the first Board of Directors. They held their initial meeting June 16, 1933, and launched the gigantic program of TVA.<sup>23</sup>

Viewed on the map, the watershed area of the Tennessee River has the rough appearance of a butterfly with its waist at Chattanooga. Portions of seven states—Kentucky, Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi—are included in the region, which is about as large as England and Scotland combined. Moving from the high elevations of the Great Smokies on the east to the river bottoms on the west, there is great variety in the territory covered. Similarly, there is diversity in economic interest, as one moves from the mountains, with their mines, forests, and small farms, to such industrial cities as Knoxville, Chattanooga, and Huntsville, on to the plantation section of the lower river. With all this dissimilarity, there were, however, common fundamental problems in 1933.

The hill country of the east wing of the butterfly had been partially denuded by wasteful lumbering practices and by farmers who decided to clear fields, no matter what the slope. The exaggerated claim that the farmer's wife could look up her cabin chimney to see if her man was still plowing was not the product of a too fertile imagination. Corn and tobacco, often planted without rotation, in fields where the soil was naturally thin, exposed it to the elements. Although the western wing of the butterfly is much lower in elevation, it comprises a rolling countryside, where cotton was the usual crop. Here, too, the soil was sick as a consequence of erosion and leaching, produced by conditions which followed in the wake of King Cotton.

Naturally, these circumstances varied in degree from place to

<sup>23</sup> During the early years, a bitter disagreement among the members of the board resulted in the removal of A. E. Morgan. He was succeeded by James P. Pope, lawyer and ex-Senator from Idaho. The next change occurred when Lilienthal was appointed to the Atomic Energy Commission. His place was taken by Gordon Clapp, who had come to the TVA as a young man in 1933. The only other change in the board membership was the appointment of Harry A. Curtis, industrial chemist and dean of the College of Engineering at the University of Missouri, as the successor of H. A. Morgan, when the latter retired.

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place in the valley, but they were such as often to make rain the enemy and not the friend of man. The exposed soil invited it to dig out gullies and carry the melted topsoil into the streams. Moreover, mild winters with a succession of brief freezes and following thaws never locked the topsoil in place at the period when rainfall was most heavy. This loss of one of man's most vital resources left only a discouraging bequest to succeeding generations.

Annually, from December through April, the Tennessee River was subject, except for occasional years, to a succession of floods. Sometimes, as in 1867 and 1917, they were of major proportions, but damage was done each time the river overflowed its banks. It gathered its waters in the mountain regions where in some sections the average yearly rainfall reaches eighty-four inches, the highest east of the Rockies. This great volume of water poured quickly down the steep slopes to the upper tributaries of the river and wreaked destruction through the whole length of the valley. The Tennessee was a flash stream, wild and unpredictable, which carried with it tons and tons of the most productive soil of hills and lowlands.

Impoverished land is always a fair index of prosperity or the lack of it. Although no generalization can apply to the large Tennessee drainage basin, the magic wand of the 1920's had produced no great wealth for its farming population. The small cash income which was won, however, did mean that some necessities and small luxuries could be bought. When the depression broke and agricultural prices fell, the harvests of corn, tobacco, and cotton could scarcely pay the cost of marketing. Black despair hovered over the homes of many families. Drudgery had not been conquered in the better days. Few farms and fewer mountain homes were served by electricity.

In the towns and cities of the valley, commercial and industrial life was immediately affected by the panic. Long columns sought aid from relief sources, and the unemployed worried over financial commitments and daily needs. As everywhere, pessimism ruled, when job opportunities of TVA construction brought new hope. For the present, at least, it meant employment to the people of the valley. As is commonly true of great events in the area, one of the mountain singers seized the circumstances and expressed them in a typical ballad.

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My name is William Edwards, I live down Cove Creek way.  
I'm workin' on the project they call the TVA.  
The government begun it when I was but a child,  
But now they are in earnest and Tennessee's gone wild.  
All up and down the Valley they heard the glad alarm;  
The government means business—it's workin' like a charm.  
Oh, see the boys a-comin'—their government they trust.  
Just hear their hammers singin'—they'll build that dam or bust.

To such individuals as "William Edwards," TVA was a gigantic relief measure. But more thoughtful persons realized the magnitude of the project. The engineers and scientists of the Authority proposed a task which would have been to the liking of Paul Bunyan. Viewing the valley as a unit, as had so frequently been desired and never attempted, they devised a system of dams and reservoirs to make the waters of the river "walk" through the valley and work for the people on the way. Preliminary plans included the investigation of possible dam sites, silting, stream flow: seeking local sources of construction materials and mapping the region.

The first specific responsibility of TVA was the operation of the fertilizer plants at Muscle Shoals, and Wilson dam and its power facilities. This necessitated securing markets for the surplus power generated and the preparation of plans for research and experimentation in fertilizer manufacture and use. In order to accomplish the first, transmission lines had to be built or secured and contracts made with a variety of outlets, which included the existing privately owned utilities, municipalities, and rural co-operatives in the area. Co-operation for the fertilizer and soil conservation programs was initiated with the experiment stations and agricultural extension services of the seven valley states, while research was started in laboratories in compliance with the national defense direction in the Act. Investigations were initiated on the use of cover crops, terracing, and reforestation. With the agricultural agencies, demonstration programs were begun on privately owned farms, so that neighbors could see and compare results obtained under scientifically managed methods.

Within less than four months after the directors organized the Authority, construction was begun on the first of the tributary reser-



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voir dams at Cove Creek on the Clinch River. This was later named Norris Dam in honor of Senator George Norris. Shortly after, work on Wheeler Dam, located on the main river, just above Wilson Dam, was started. At both, villages were built to house the workers, and health, educational, and recreational services were provided.

The creation of large inland lakes presented a whole host of problems, some of them delicate and complex. Lands that were to be drowned or used for reservoir margins had to be purchased, and the owners assisted, when necessary, to find new homesites. Farm communities, villages, schools, churches, and cemeteries had to be relocated. Highways were rerouted or raised above the water level. The question of tax replacement was studied so that a "just policy of compensation" could be adopted.<sup>24</sup> The TVA pattern of operation was thus set in its early months. All that came afterward was usually an extension or modification within the same general areas.

The creation of this huge government enterprise was an immediate cause of disturbance to generators and distributors of electricity, both within the valley and without. It resulted in bitter legal controversy, of which the first important consequence was the Ashwander case, which was instituted in September, 1934, and ultimately decided in February, 1936. At that time the United States Supreme Court held eight to one that Congress was within its constitutional rights in authorizing the construction of Wilson Dam, the selling of power generated there, and the extension of transmission lines to secure a wider market than was available at the dam, itself. It was the latter phase of the decision which was most troubling to power interests, but Chief Justice Hughes in his opinion stated unequivocally the court's belief that the construction of such lines by the government was constitutional. "We suppose," he said, "that in the early days of mining in the West, if the Government had undertaken to operate a silver mine on its domain, it could have acquired the mules or horses and equipment to carry its silver to market. And the transmission lines for electrical energy are but a facility for conveying to market that particular sort of property, and the acquisition of these

<sup>24</sup> *Annual Report of the Tennessee Valley Authority for Year Ending June 30, 1934*; *Annual Report of the Tennessee Valley Authority for Year Ending June 30, 1935*, *passim*.

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lines raises no different constitutional question, unless in some way there is an invasion of the rights reserved to the States or to the people.”<sup>25</sup>

Within three months, nineteen utility companies banded together to challenge the constitutionality of the TVA itself by suing for an injunction against the further construction of dams and the distribution of power from the installations built since 1933. They were successful in the district court and the decision was appealed by TVA. The Court of Appeals sat in Chattanooga for seven weeks in the winter of 1937-1938 to hear the case. Ex-Secretary of War Newton D. Baker and Wendell Willkie, president of the Commonwealth and Southern Corporation, the utility holding company, directed the case for the power companies, while the TVA lawyers were led by James Lawrence Fly, later chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, and John Lord O'Brian, distinguished constitutional lawyer from Buffalo, New York. The opinion read by Presiding Judge Florence Allen at the conclusion of the trial held that “the mandatory provisions of the statute that navigation and flood control be given primary consideration, both at the other dams, built and planned, and at Norris Dam, is at all times scrupulously followed, and that the statute is neither violated nor exceeded.” The court further held that the Congress was within its constitutional rights in passing the act. This decision was immediately appealed to the Supreme Court by the utilities. That court ruled, however, that the companies lacked standing to bring such a suit, inasmuch as their franchises did not give them immunity to competition, and dismissed the case on January 30, 1939.<sup>26</sup>

Chattanooga watched the legal battle between the TVA and the power utilities with intense interest and noted the struggle in which Knoxville had engaged to acquire a city-owned electrical distribution system. Although current was being distributed by the Tennessee Electric Power Company at a rate less than that which had been charged formerly, it was argued that publicly-owned facilities would be able to reduce the rate further. The Chattanooga city commission consequently ordered a survey by engineers to secure information

<sup>25</sup> *United States Reports*, CCXCVII, 339.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, CCCVI, 118-152.

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about the city's power needs and to estimate the cost of a distribution system. A referendum to decide whether the city should issue \$8,000,000 worth of bonds to finance the construction of a municipal system was authorized to be held simultaneously with the city election of March 12, 1935. Enabling legislation for the sale of the bonds and the operation of an electric plant by the city was passed by the state legislature.

The public power advocates organized the Public Power League of Chattanooga to campaign for city ownership. They maintained this would be the way to achieve the fullest realization of the benefits from TVA. Immediately, those who favored the private utilities formed the Citizens' and Taxpayers' Association in opposition. The first group contended that without public power Chattanooga's future would be impaired, while the other insisted the city would be financially ruined if it should attempt to go into the power business. Much bitterness was exhibited in the campaign preceding the referendum. The newspapers divided, with the *Times* upholding private ownership, as did the newly organized *Free Press*, while the *News* supported public power.

Registration for the election was the heaviest up to that date in the city's history. As a consequence, cries of fraud were hurled by both sides. Bad weather, however, held the balloting down. Public power won easily,—19,056 to 8,096. The *News* called it, "victory for the people," whereas the *Times* said it was disappointed, but as the issue had been decided by the free vote of the people, the proper course was "to work for the building of a better Chattanooga under the conditions that had been voted upon the city."<sup>27</sup>

The city authorities immediately took the proper steps for the creation of an agency to handle its new venture, and on April 17, 1935, the Electric Power Board of Chattanooga was established. Efforts were at once initiated to secure a contract with TVA for current and to reach an agreement with the Tennessee Electric Power Company for the purchase of its local facilities, or in the event of failure to accomplish the latter to construct a duplicate system. It was hoped that the purchase could be accomplished as all recognized the uneconomical aspects of competition in the util-

<sup>27</sup> *Chattanooga News*, March 13, 1935; *Chattanooga Times*, March 13, 1935.



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ity field. This turn of events precipitated a whole new series of court suits. The power board sought to test the validity of the power company's franchise, while the utility company attempted to block loans from the Public Works Administration to the power board. Local citizens and owners of Chattanooga city bonds undertook through a variety of actions to block the sale of additional bonds on the grounds that their own holdings would be depreciated. One resident worked for a new referendum to overthrow the result of the first, and from a booth in town secured more than 5,000 signatures to such a petition. The latter, however, was ruled illegitimate, as only a fraction of the names were those of "qualified voters." This led to more litigation over the legal definition of what constituted a qualified voter.

In the meantime, unsuccessful negotiations were attempted by TVA to purchase the state-wide facilities of the Tennessee Electric Power Company from the Commonwealth and Southern Company, the holding company which controlled it. The delays incident to all these controversies and negotiations perturbed the Chattanooga power board, which was under contract to start operations within a given time under the terms of its PWA loan. A substation was consequently constructed and on January 23, 1939, the first TVA power was delivered by the power board to residential consumers. One week later, the United States Supreme Court dismissed the suit of the private utilities against the TVA, and brought an end to the last major litigation.

Almost immediately an agreement was reached by Wendell Willkie and David E. Lilienthal for the purchase of the Tennessee Electric Power Company. But new difficulties arose to be resolved. Delicate contractual agreements between TVA and numerous local units over the purchase of individual properties of the T.E.P. Company had to be revised or arranged. Legislation had to be secured to organize co-operatives and to allow cities and towns, including Chattanooga, to issue additional bonds. Furthermore, TVA had to get congressional authority to complete the purchase. This was delayed in committee until an extension of time had to be secured from the Commonwealth and Southern. Finally, in July, the necessary law was passed. Thus the way was cleared to end the years of negotiation and legal battles.

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On August 15, 1939, the formal ceremonies attending the transfer were held in New York City and the Tennessee Electric Power Company passed out of existence. Before a number of guests and officials, Lilienthal gave Willkie a check for \$44,720,000 for that portion of the properties acquired by TVA. The total purchase price was \$78,425,095, the difference being assumed by municipalities and co-operatives. Chattanooga's share was \$10,850,000.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup> The other participating communities and co-operatives and the amounts of the total purchase price they assumed were:

Nashville	\$14,311,200
Athens	360,600
Cleveland	686,300
Clinton	311,100
Columbia	657,000
Dickson	93,700
Harriman	251,900
La Follette	450,400
Lawrenceburg	31,900
Lenoir City	245,300
Lexington	131,300
Loudon	95,100
Maryville	390,000
McMinnville	403,600
Mount Pleasant	240,000
Murfreesboro	548,200
Pulaski	100,400
Rockwood	121,000
Shelbyville	311,000
Sweetwater	82,700
Winchester	149,800
Plateau Electric Co-operative	53,600
Cumberland Association	141,800
Duck River Association	701,500
Lincoln Association	152,100
Volunteer Association	276,700
Meriwether Lewis Association	202,000
Middle Tennessee Association	442,400
North Georgia Association	51,400
Pickwick Association	270,000
Tri-County Association	133,300
Upper Cumberland Association	267,300

*Annual Report of the Tennessee Valley Authority, 1939, pp. 52, 53.*

The price for the T. E. P. properties was reached through negotiation and was not based on an appraised value. All holders of preferred stock and bonds received 100 cents on the dollar for their holdings. Electric Power Board of Chattanooga: *First Annual Report, p. 10.*

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When Lilienthal handed Willkie the check, the latter commented in his traditional manner, "This is sure a lot of money for a couple of Indiana farmers to be kicking about." In his comment to the public, Willkie was more serious. He said that he regretted the sale, but that it was impossible for the Tennessee Electric Power Company to compete with the Government-subsidized TVA. He hoped that the sale would be a warning to citizens everywhere and would stimulate them to resist further Government competition with private ownership. Lilienthal's statement to the press contained no exultation over the victory. He said that the purchase should put an end to argument over the TVA and that the latter should be able consequently "to concentrate upon its main purpose: the development of the great Tennessee Valley region."<sup>29</sup>

Chattanoogaans were still divided in their attitude toward public power. The *Times*, which had grown more friendly toward TVA under the editorial direction of Julian LaR. Harris, the son of the author of *Uncle Remus*, said editorially, "Public power has come to the Tennessee Valley because the people demanded it. . . . The dead past ought to bury all the arguments pro and con which have been settled by the established fact. The problem for the present and the future is to justify this extension of the democratic concept by soundly managed service to the public as a whole." The *News*, which had constantly carried the banner of public power, commented, "From every standpoint, Chattanooga should rejoice at the great transfer of the day. This is the true signal for the community's—and the region's—forward march." The *Free Press* editor, writing under the caption, "The End of a Thrilling Story," remarked, "Tomorrow, perhaps, we can adjust ourselves to the new order of things; but today, the tragedy of personal loss to ourselves and to our community in the passing of the old order overwhelms all other emotions."<sup>30</sup>

The Tennessee Electric Power Company bade its patrons and friends farewell in full-page advertisements in the newspapers. They contained a reproduction of a photograph of a shelf of books. Among

<sup>29</sup> *Chattanooga Times*, August 16, 1939.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, August 16, 1939; *Chattanooga News*, August 16, 1939; *Chattanooga Free Press*, August 16, 1939.



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the volumes included were: Ramsey's *Annals of Tennessee*, Heiskell's *Andrew Jackson and Early Tennessee History*, Guild's *Old Times in Tennessee*, Pollard's *The Lost Cause*, and Wise's *The End of an Era*. The chief focus was on the final page of a volume. *The History of the Tennessee Electric Power Company*, which read: "And so private ownership and initiative withdrew in favor of the Government. The Company—pioneer citizen and taxpayer—which for more than half a century served the people of the State of Tennessee, was liquidated. The End."

To users of electricity, there was no interruption of service in the changeover at midnight August 15, 1939, from the Tennessee Electric Power Company to the Electric Power Board of Chattanooga. The majority of the employees of the private company continued to hold their jobs under the new management and were assured that they would be safe from political interference in their positions. The power board serviced an area of approximately 500 square miles, of which Hamilton County constituted the main part.<sup>31</sup> In this area, approximately 70 per cent of the residents were consumers.

The policy which the board adopted was that the operation should be self-supporting and that facilities should be extended as rapidly as possible to care for all, however remote, who wished service.<sup>32</sup> In line with the TVA policy, the board adopted a voluntary program to pay tax equivalents to all political units, and consequently became the largest single payer of real and property taxes in Chattanooga and Hamilton County. Rates were immediately reduced. Under the provisions of the contract with the TVA, should any surpluses accrue to the operation, consumer rates were to be reduced accordingly.

During the whole period of legal controversy and negotiation with power companies and newly organized municipal distributors, the TVA went steadily forward with its program. Construction on

<sup>31</sup> The area of service extends from Graysville, a small community near Dayton, on the north, to Flintstone, Georgia, on the south, and from the neighborhood of Hale's Bar, on the west, to beyond Ooltewah, in the east.

<sup>32</sup> Although World War II handicapped this program, by 1950 it was estimated by officials of the board that 95% of the people in the service area had access to current.

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tributary and main river dams proceeded according to scheduled plans with one exception. Under the leadership of Representative S. D. McReynolds of the Chattanooga district, Congress authorized the building of the Chickamauga Dam, approximately seven miles by river above Chattanooga, prior to the over-all timetable established by the Authority. Consequently, on January 13, 1936, construction was begun on this project. Approximately 60,000 acres of land were purchased. Borings were made at several sites before a satisfactory foundation could be found for the dam, which with the land cost in the neighborhood of \$38,900,000. In the following years, 4,000 men were employed, with something less than two-thirds of them working on the dam, itself.

In constructing the 5,800-foot dam, 2,635,000 cubic yards of earth and rock fill were used, and 491,000 cubic yards of concrete were poured. The maximum height is 129 feet, and the lock lift measures 55 feet. The powerhouse, which like all TVA units bears the inscription, "Built for the people of the United States," was equipped with three generators, capable of producing 81,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity.<sup>33</sup>

While the dam was under construction, approximately 1,500 men worked at the multitude of jobs necessary to prepare the reservoir area. The lake itself is 58.9 miles long and has a shore line of 810 miles, including the islands. Nine hundred families were forced to move, among them the residents of the village of Harrison, early seat of the Hamilton County government. Archeological remains of aboriginal inhabitants were sought for preservation under the direction of Dr. T. M. N. Lewis of the University of Tennessee. Four hundred and twenty-five graves were transferred to new locations, from 24 small cemeteries. Transmission, telephone, and telegraph lines were moved, and 81 miles of road were rerouted, raised, or otherwise protected. Inasmuch as the new water level would impair the sewerage system of Dayton, new facilities were constructed. The final step was the complete clearing of the area to be covered by the

<sup>33</sup> By 1950, the use of electricity in the valley had increased so that the generating capacity at Chickamauga Dam had to be enlarged  $\frac{1}{3}$  by the installation of an additional unit. In the same year, the construction of a bridge on top of the dam was started.

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impounded waters. All buildings were torn down, brush cleared, and a total of 6,000 acres of timberland cut.<sup>34</sup>

These details of the Chickamauga project are but examples which explain somewhat the gigantic task of construction accomplished by TVA. It is one in a series of seven dams which have been built on the main river and eleven on the tributaries.<sup>35</sup> It is not so spectacular as Fontana on the Little Tennessee, high in the Great Smokies, with its 480 feet of height, or so huge as Kentucky which stretches 8,422 feet across the lower river and impounds a lake of 158,300 acres with a shoreline of 2,380 miles.

The gates of Chickamauga Dam were closed on January 15, 1940. Already the nation had become alarmed because of the conflict which had begun the preceding September among the European nations. Within a few days of the opening of hostilities, the TVA sent to the President a memorandum, stating the program which could be put into immediate action to assist in a wartime emergency. Within the year plans were made to convert the plants at Muscle Shoals for the production of war materials, and work was under way to increase generating capacity. Meanwhile, a variety of privately-owned plants for the production of munitions and metals was established in the valley, attracted by the availability of power.

When actual war came to the United States in December, 1941, the exuberance of 1898 and 1917 was missing in Chattanooga. Everyone realized the grim, hard task which lay ahead. Men had been leaving for military service since the operation of the Selective Service Act of 1940 began. As typical in war days, uniforms were common on the streets of the city. Soldiers stationed at Camp Forrest, located near Tullahoma in Middle Tennessee, came to town for week-end visits. At Fort Oglethorpe, cavalry troops were removed from their horses and trained for modern mechanized warfare. Here too was

<sup>34</sup> *Tennessee Valley Authority, The Chickamauga Project* (Technical Report No. 6). The details about the construction of the project have been taken from this volume.

<sup>35</sup> In the TVA system in 1962 there were 48 dams: 9 on the main river, 34 on tributaries, and 5 on the Cumberland. The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers controls the last, but operates them under lease to the TVA. Alcoa owns 15 of the tributary dams, but TVA directs the release of water from them.



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the induction center for the area, through which passed thousands of civilians on their way to become soldiers.

The usual masculine tone of war, however, was sharply modified, when in January, 1943, Fort Oglethorpe was designated as the Third Woman's Army Auxiliary Corps training center. By September of that year, except for the induction center, all men had been removed from the post. By April, 1944, even the command at Fort Oglethorpe was entrusted to a woman officer, Lieutenant Colonel Elizabeth Strayhorn. One consequence was that "feminine gear" in the department stores took the chief place of interest of the military in Chattanooga, as WACS in uniform filled the streets of the shopping district. Just as the war drew to a close, Fort Oglethorpe became an Army Redistribution and Specialty School Center, and the women soldiers moved to a different post.<sup>36</sup>

Like other American cities, Chattanooga participated in bond sales and grew accustomed to the restrictions of rationing. Women took the place of many men in industry and in other unaccustomed places. Old plants were turned to new purposes, and new companies were created to help fill war orders. Among the latter was the Volunteer Ordnance Works, operated by the Hercules Powder Company. It was built and placed in operation in a short period of time in a hilly area near Chickamauga Lake. By river, rail, and highway, the great diversification of products from Chattanooga's factories, which ran the gamut from huge boilers for steamships to medical supplies and K rations, made their way to war.

These or similar activities were reproduced in other American towns, but the tremendous increase of war production in the valley as a whole, which was the consequence of the TVA as a source of power, greatly overshadowed Chattanooga's efforts. By its record-breaking construction the Authority consistently enlarged its power production, of which 75 per cent, at the peak, was devoted to war purposes. It was stated that the "Tennessee Valley produced one-tenth of the power produced for war purposes by all the public and private power systems in the United States," in the fiscal year ending

<sup>36</sup> *History of the Third WAAC Training Center, 1943-1945, Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, passim.*

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June 30, 1945. In that same year, over 12 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity were generated by the TVA. This was the largest production of any integrated power system in the country, and represented a trebling of TVA power in the period, 1940-1945.<sup>37</sup>

The TVA chemical plants at Muscle Shoals supplied almost 59,000 tons of elemental phosphorus, 60 per cent of the total used by the armed forces for incendiary bombs, tracer bullets, smoke screens, and other combat purposes. The same plants also manufactured "nearly 29,000 tons of anhydrous ammonia, 10,000 tons of ammonium nitrate liquor, and 64,000 tons of ammonium nitrate crystal," for the ordnance department. For the synthetic rubber program a total of 228,500 tons of calcium carbide were produced. In addition to these direct military aids, the TVA supplied over 375,000 tons of fertilizer materials, to assist in the increase of domestic food supplies, and 114,000 tons for Lend-Lease and other export to the country's Allies. An entirely different phase of the Authority's war effort was the mapping from photographs of more than a half million square miles of enemy territory, including such major combat areas as Normandy, Italy, and the islands of the Pacific.<sup>38</sup>

It is difficult to grasp the magnitude of this series of contributions, which in themselves were so important to the victory. Even more spectacular, however, was the accomplishment at Oak Ridge, about twenty miles northwest of Knoxville, an accomplishment attributable to the great resources of power developed by the TVA. There, an area of 59,000 acres was converted from rough forest land to a metropolitan community with all its modern services within a space of a relatively few months. This mushroom city excited all types of conjecture throughout the area. The common question was: "What are they doing at Oak Ridge?" It was realized that the huge plants, one of which had three miles of wall surrounding six hundred acres, were for some secret purpose connected with the war. Indiscreet rumor-mongers, who attempted to give an impression of knowing more about what was being manufactured than was actually the case, found

<sup>37</sup> *Annual Report of the Tennessee Valley Authority*, 1945, pp. 2 and 57; *ibid.*, 1946, p. 1.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 1946, pp. 2-3.

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themselves visited by security agents. One story that passed around was that the mysterious product would be rolled across the land, destroying everything within a wide radius.

The explosion of an atomic bomb at Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, demonstrated the new power for destruction which had been created. The curtain of secrecy was partly withdrawn from Oak Ridge.

The residents of farms, hamlets, and cities like Chattanooga received an economic boost as a consequence of their war work, which carried over into the days following the defeat of Germany and Japan. They saw the nation disarm and Fort Oglethorpe abandoned as a military establishment, when the bugle blew retreat on December 31, 1946. However, challenge and contention did not pass from the region, which for so long had seen so much of both.



## CHAPTER XXI

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### *"... On the Same Street"*

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As the twentieth century reached its middle period, the Southern hill country became the scene of pioneering a new age, with scientists, armed with their various tools, replacing the frontiersmen with their coonskin caps and long rifles. Some of them worked with problems of nuclear fission, some with future journeys to the moon, some with problems of hydraulics, and others with the more mundane matter of moving about on earth.

Before the 1920's it took a bold individual to attempt a trip by auto in the Chattanooga region. A journey to Nashville or Atlanta at best required a full day and often two since tires had to be frequently changed, streams forded, or the car tugged out of the mud by local mule-power. A demand for national highways had germinated in other areas and local motorists were anxious to participate in aiding in such endeavors. In 1915 when the Dixie Highway Association was incorporated to link the midwest and Florida by a highway, Chattanooga dominated the group under the leadership of Judge Michael M. Allison. Enthusiasm for the project often turned into heated controversy over the exact location of the route, but by 1927 the Association's work was completed all the way from Detroit to Miami and the roadbed had been graded and much of it paved. In fitting tribute to Judge Allison, a marker was erected on Walden's

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Ridge, the highest elevation on the highway, as the association's slogan, “We all live on the same street,” was realized.<sup>1</sup>

With the completion of the Dixie Highway and other main roads sponsored by the newly organized state highway commissions, the automobile soon brought a revolutionary impact to the countryside. The rising crescendo of commercial vehicles soon competed with the more quiet purrs of the passenger car. Together they subordinated any states' rights argument, which deplored Federal aid to further construction.

Movement over the new roads generally reflected a haste not associated with the Southern tradition. The local farmer, freed physically by his car, but economically obligated for its purchase price, could take his produce to market with a new ease and could join the courthouse group on Saturdays without concern about his return trip by nightfall. The intolerable miles which had separated rural families from church, doctor, and school gradually disappeared.

Provincialism grew gradually weaker as the packaged products of great commercial giants reached the shelves of local stores and the genial general store which had had its hour in our social history disappeared. Chattanooga's trade area fingered out along the highways indicating its presence by a variety of road signs and barn advertisements. Parks, lakes, mountains, and historic sites became meccas for touring America with its ever-present camera and comment about the advertising enterprise of Rock City. The tourist came south in summer and winter leaving millions of dollars in Chattanooga tills on his way to the Great Smokies or the sunshine of Florida.

Today the original highway network is depleted and overtaxed. But throughout the area one sees men with transits or operating huge earth-moving machines to reduce the mountains or fill in the valleys in the huge program of construction called for by the plans for a national system of interstate highways.

<sup>1</sup> *Minutes of the Dixie Highway Association* in the possession of the Chattanooga Automobile Club. Twenty persons signed the papers of incorporation and put up \$1,000 each as a sign of their interest. Seven were Chattanoogaans: Richard Hardy, Claudius H. Huston, Charles E. James, W. R. Long, John A. Patten, Thomas R. Preston, and Morris E. Temple.

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As the highway engineers have changed the face of nature, so have their counterparts with the TVA created of the once unpredictable Tennessee River an assured route for the movement of commerce. Rivaling the leviathans of the highway and the bleating diesels of the railroads are the utilitarian tugs which in 1960 moved 12,400,000 tons of produce over the now placid stream.<sup>2</sup> One consequence has been an increase of competition from other transportation forms with suggested rate adjustments, but more challenging to the TVA has been the heavy cloud of deepening controversy between the public and private power advocates.

From its inception, as we have seen, the Authority has been the center of vigorous contention because of this fundamental issue. But the fact that geography limited the number of available hydro-electric generating sites seemed to ensure that the TVA would not spread. World War II required the development of maximum capacity, but after its close the power demands in the valley continued to increase, propelled upward especially by the needs of the Atomic Energy Commission's (hereafter AEC) installations at Oak Ridge and Paducah. The Authority proposed and constructed a giant steam plant at Johnsonville, Tennessee, which went into operation in late 1951, to meet the needs of the expanding atomic program.

An immediate result was new impetus to the old controversy, and lines were drawn anew across the nation, as a major struggle seemed inevitable. The intense international crisis which resulted in the Korean War of 1950 added further complications. Defense agencies had to have power and TVA built additional steam plants to provide it. But with the advent of the Eisenhower Administration and the President's direct charge of "creeping socialism," a limitation seemed in prospect. As the only alternatives were to fail to meet the expanding demands from its established customers and the defense needs of the government installations within its territory or to fill them with steam generating plants, the Directors of the Authority requested funds for the new construction. The critical situation at the time was at Memphis, which was under TVA contract. Here at the

<sup>2</sup> *Annual Report of The Tennessee Valley Authority for the Year Ending June 30, 1961*, p. 28.



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edge of its power territory the Authority proposed to build the Fulton plant.

The interest of the Administration included not only a reduction of the budget but also limitation on the expansion of the TVA. Presidential advisors cast about for possible solutions. The final decision was to aid the construction of a private plant, under contract with the AEC, to supply power to the service area of Memphis. Out of this plan developed the complex Dixon-Yates agreement. Private utility power from the new plant would supply Memphis as a replacement for the TVA power which was to go to the AEC's installation at Paducah. But the AEC was to be the agent to receive the Dixon-Yates power, which it would then deliver to the TVA. The plant to be constructed by Dixon-Yates was to be near West Memphis, Arkansas, but the power would reach the TVA at an inter-communication point in the middle of the Mississippi River, so the new company could escape regulation by the Tennessee Public Service Commission, which was friendly to TVA.

Without thorough investigation President Eisenhower assumed personal responsibility for the contract. Despite heated argument, the dissatisfaction expressed by both AEC and TVA, and the disclosure of a conflict of interest by which a non-paid Government consultant involved the banking firm with which he was permanently associated, the President continued to support the agreement.

Believing that the Dixon-Yates project was the opening gun in a program for the destruction of TVA, friends in the valley and sympathetic Congressmen took their stand alongside TVA Board Chairman Gordon Clapp in its defense. Tennessee's two Senators, Albert Gore and Estes Kefauver, took the lead in investigations, in which the contending issues actually were public and private power, or, as some would have it, socialism and the American way.

Eventually the City of Memphis decided to build its own power plant, which removed the need for the proposed Dixon-Yates facility. The contract was terminated without cost to the Government. In January, 1963, the TVA and the City of Memphis reached an agreement by which the TVA will take over the Memphis steam plant

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and operate it under lease, and the Memphis territory will again become a part of the TVA service area.<sup>3</sup>

With the particular issue quiet it was evident that TVA required a new method of financing any needed increase of facilities. Under the original act and various other acts any funds above the costs of operation and payments in lieu of taxes to local governments had gone to the Federal Treasury. No surplus could consequently be accumulated; therefore for any program of expansion it had been necessary to persuade Congress to appropriate funds.<sup>4</sup> To meet this pressing difficulty, Congress in 1959 enacted the TVA Revenue Bond Act. The implication was a recognition that the Authority was here to stay, but in the future it would raise its own capital funds for the expansion of its generating facilities and the extension of its transmission lines. The first bond issue under the act was successfully marketed in November, 1960.

Although attracting less national attention but of permanent importance is another new aspect in the TVA's program. It began in 1961 with the creation of the Authority's Office of Tributary Development, which makes more specific the traditional interest of the TVA in the tributary areas. Its purpose is to work with local organizations in the "integrated resource development . . . from fertilizer to forestry and from public health to power," in other words to transfer from the Tennessee itself to the valleys of the tributary streams all the activities which have distinguished the TVA.<sup>5</sup>

Most of the expansion, however, has been a consequence of the constantly increasing demands of the important Federal agencies in TVA territory. In 1961 the AEC alone used 28,200,000,000 kilowatt hours, and the combined Federal agencies required 48% of the power generated by the dams and plants of the Authority.

The production and sale of electric power have grown to such

<sup>3</sup> For detailed study of the Dixon-Yates contract see Aaron Wildavsky, *Dixon-Yates: A Study in Power Politics*.

<sup>4</sup> Roscoe C. Martin, ed.: *TVA, the First Twenty Years*, pp. 26-28.

<sup>5</sup> *Annual Report of the Tennessee Valley Authority for the Year Ending June 30, 1962*, pp. 8-18. The first practical application under this program was in cooperation with the Beech River Watershed Development Authority of West Tennessee.

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proportions that they have necessarily become dominant in the program of the TVA, with some consequential effect upon its original basic philosophy. In 1961 the Authority generated 65,000,000,000 kilowatt hours of electrical energy, of which 20,500,000,000 came from hydroelectric sources and 44,500,000,000 from steam plants which burned 17,900,000 tons of coal.<sup>6</sup>

One of these hungry installations stands at Widow's Creek on the fringe of the Sequatchie Valley. Coal from the many veins which penetrate the nearby hogback ridges is readily available and has been mined for years by small operators. These fields, however, were soon brought into drastic competition with modern, mechanized facilities in western Kentucky where three gigantic machines alone are reported to be capable of doing the work of three hundred miners. A legacy of suits charging monopoly, of bitter strikes many of which are described as “wild-cat,” work stoppages, and unemployment have plagued the Sequatchie miners, many of whom linger on the margin of survival, since 1955. To the people of TVA, sensitive to the criticism under which such government activities constantly labor, the Authority's position is based on business methods. Objective standards require contracts made entirely on competitive prices.<sup>7</sup>

Another application of this fundamental principle by the TVA led to both civil and criminal court proceedings. In May 1959 the Authority disclosed the receipt of identical bids from major manufacturers of electrical equipment. The result was the indictment of twenty-nine companies, among them some of the industrial giants of the country, and some of their officials for violation of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. Federal Judge J. Cullen Ganey presided at the trials in Philadelphia, at which the companies pleaded guilty or *nolo contendere*. Judge Ganey's verdicts set a new precedent by the inclusion of prison sentences as well as fines. This and the promi-

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>7</sup> Conversation with E. C. Hill, Coal-Procurement Branch, TVA. See Nat Caldwell and Gene S. Graham, “The Strange Romance Between John L. Lewis and Cyrus Eaton,” *Harper's Magazine*, 223 (December 1961), 25-32. Ed Parks, “The Creeping Conservatism of TVA,” *The Reporter*, 26 (January 4, 1962), 31-35.



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nence of those involved caused the incident to attract wide attention.<sup>8</sup>

In the immediate Chattanooga area the local Electric Power Board continues to distribute TVA power, with virtually a consistent record of growth since its creation in 1935. Through its history it has been the largest *ad valorem* tax-payer to both the city and Hamilton County, with a total tax provision in 1961 of \$1,352,900. The average customer's cost of electricity was 8.9 mills per kilowatt hour, which is approximately one-third of the national average of 2.45 cents. Because of this low cost and the availability provided by the Electric Power Board's network of transmission lines, use of electrical appliances within the service area of the Board is almost universal.<sup>9</sup>

This dependency upon electricity became a great handicap in early March, 1960, when without warning a cold, cruel storm swept away the comforts of modern living for thousands of people and pointed sharply at the narrow margin upon which men exist. On Wednesday, March 2nd, a heavy, cold rain began, which because of the low temperatures near the ground froze to everything on the higher elevations surrounding the city. Lookout, Signal, and Mowbray Mountains, Walden's Ridge and the crest of Missionary Ridge all quickly became glittering wonderlands. Before nightfall a cracking fury, like the artillery fire of the 1860's, was heard everywhere. Power and telephone poles surrendered to the weight of the accumulated ice, proud oaks twisted into tortured shapes and ancient pines splintered or uprooted. Havoc and destruction made a nightmare for scattered families and for residents forced or determined to remain in their mountain homes. Even those who hastened to refuges in town found their way made dangerous by the icy roads, falling or fallen trees and other debris.

Approximately 10,000 homes were without heat; about 8,000 telephones were cut off; estimates of the total damage on the three

<sup>8</sup> See John Herling: *The Great Price Conspiracy* for a reconstruction of this episode.

<sup>9</sup> Ninety-six percent of the Board's customers have electric refrigerators; 95.3% use electric ranges; 54.1% heat their houses with electricity. *23rd Annual Report*, Electric Power Board of Chattanooga for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1962.

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mountains alone ran up to \$4,650,000. Authorities immediately declared a state of emergency and called out the National Guard, members of which ran errands of mercy or stood guard to prevent vandalism. For ten days, only residents of the badly stricken areas were allowed to visit them.

The telephone company and the power board brought linemen and other workers from considerable distances in an effort to hasten the restoration of service, but the frigid winds, which played a tinkling symphony with swaying branches, and the ice proved a constant handicap. Even the sun shone without its accustomed warmth, but under it the wreckage of the storm glittered in a magic light, for the “highlighting of the ice acted as a prism, breaking up the light, refracting and reflecting all the colors of the spectrum. Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet flashed before one’s eyes,” as one entranced viewer wrote.

Beyond the immediate city area, the great storm spread across the vast Cumberland Plateau and the Great Valley. It struck Fort Payne, Scottsboro, Huntsville, Gadsden and the Sand Mountain areas of Alabama. It hit Rome, Dalton, Trenton, Calhoun, Lafayette and other Georgia towns. All these as well as the communities of East Tennessee felt its fury; but ironically the rural folks with their stoves and fireplaces, ricks of wood and outdoor habits, suffered less than their city cousins. However, they also had their share of the financial loss: the U. S. Forestry Service in Atlanta estimated that over the whole area the storm destroyed at least 10,000,000 board feet of saw-timber.<sup>10</sup>

In its effects the ice storm in some respects was a throwback to an earlier period when men and women of the frontier lived and died in immediate contact with the caprice and power of untamed nature. Industrial progress and urban living seemed to have subdued all but the worse excesses of raw force and destruction, and people lived in artificial environments of controlled temperatures and harnessed steam or electricity. Then on an August day in 1945 an airplane flying over a Japanese city dropped an atomic bomb and men every-

<sup>10</sup> *The Chattanooga Times*, March 23, 1960, Special Ice Storm Section.

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where came to the stark realization that modern science had unleashed power of a type which makes the sun blaze and can destroy all vestiges of their inheritance on earth.

Back in 1943, under the pressure of war, scientists supervised the hasty construction of facilities at Oak Ridge, a community in the creation of which the legendary Paul Bunyan might well have had a hand. Within two years 75,000 individuals, all living behind "security fences," made it the fifth largest town in Tennessee. The Federal Government was responsible for its every facet of life, and with the close of World War II its population and activities dwindled markedly. No one apparently knew what the future of the city the bomb had built would be.

In January, 1947, the newly created civilian Atomic Energy Commission assumed control of the nation's nuclear program and made Oak Ridge a major field office. The raw boom town quickly took on aspects of permanence. At 8:47 A.M., March 19, 1949, workmen removed the gates which led into the community. Vice President Barkley and other visitors were on hand for the celebration which accompanied Oak Ridge's becoming an open community. Residents put away their badges as souvenirs; tourists found themselves welcome; and an atomic museum contained exhibits which explained earlier mysteries. Only the actual plant and laboratory areas remained closed.

In 1955 the Federal authorities relinquished their management and ownership of the community proper. The residents took the important step of establishing municipal government, which received the complete transfer of all facilities June, 1960. As the community has changed, so have the purposes of the huge installation, in which the Federal Government has an investment of \$1,500,000,000. The interest at Oak Ridge no longer concentrates on war and weapons but "now stands at the forefront in the nation's effort to further develop and expand the peaceful applications of atomic energy."<sup>11</sup>

The AEC operates through private contractors, which use govern-

<sup>11</sup> *AEC Handbook on Oak Ridge Operations*, p. 4.



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ment-owned laboratories and other facilities. The Oak Ridge Operations spread far past the original site in the Tennessee hills to include others at Paducah, Kentucky; Portsmouth, Ohio; New Brunswick, New Jersey; Fernald, Ohio; St. Louis, Missouri; and Puerto Rico. Oak Ridge, itself, contains five major installations. One is the gaseous diffusion plant, the purpose of which is “large-scale separation of the uranium isotope 235 from a chemical compound of uranium by the process of gaseous diffusion through porous barriers.” This plant alone uses 15,500,000,000 kilowatt hours of electricity annually, approximately the same amount as New York City. It was the first to be built at Oak Ridge, spreads over approximately 600 acres and represents an investment of around \$836,000,000.<sup>12</sup>

The other activities of a similar sort—the Y-12 plant and the Oak Ridge National Laboratories—also have their fabulous associations. The first includes about 170 buildings, and when one of its programs needed the use of copper, then too scarce in such quantities, silver to the value of \$300,000,000, which could be borrowed from the United States Treasury and returned when the emergency was over, became a substitute. The Oak Ridge National Laboratory comprises one of the world’s largest nuclear research centers. Its particular interests are now in peacetime applications of atomic energy: reactor technology, chemical technology, basic research in biology, chemistry, physics, metallurgy, radiation protection, and applied biology, among others.

Educational programs have their place in the program of the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, but they are the major reason for the Oak Ridge Institute of Nuclear Studies. This activity includes thirty-eight universities of the South and the Southwest, nine of them private, the rest state institutions. This organization has as its purposes the stimulation of research in the fields of atomic energy and the improvement of programs of graduate study.

In addition to all these, the University of Tennessee under contract with The Atomic Energy Commission maintains an Agricultural

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

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Research Laboratory at Oak Ridge. The interest there includes experimentation with laboratory and farm animals, in applied radiobotany and plant breeding.<sup>13</sup>

Emergency brought the atomic energy installation to East Tennessee, where human labor and electric power were both available. Similar reasons brought another military activity to the Tullahoma area in which the Army of Tennessee had wintered in the mud and rain almost a century before. Only a previous interest in science fiction could have prepared one for the sort of thing undertaken at the Arnold Engineering Development Center (hereafter AEDC).<sup>14</sup> Construction started on the project early in 1950 after Governor Browning deeded the original 34,000 acres of the World War II training area, Camp Forrest, from the state of Tennessee to the Air Force. It was to operate as a testing service to military and civilian agencies of the government involved in aerospace work and to educational institutions.

The first laboratories went into operation in 1953, but even before completion of the buildings it became necessary to incorporate new equipment and materials. Not only this, but then and since it has been constantly necessary to modify principles and techniques to include the rapidly increasing knowledge in this area of scientific activity. Three major laboratories constitute the complex. One tests aircraft, missile, and spacecraft propulsion systems. In it in 1961 the scientists could simulate conditions at altitudes from sea level to more than 140,000 feet, speeds up to three times that of sound (Mach three), and temperatures from minus 120 degrees Fahrenheit to plus 800 degrees.

In the Von Karman Gas Dynamics Facility<sup>15</sup> operators test scale models of aircraft, missiles, and space vehicles under extreme conditions in electric-arc-driven hypervelocity tunnels, in which they can simulate temperatures of 8,000 degrees Fahrenheit, pressures

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 38-40; *16th Annual Report*, Oak Ridge Institute of Nuclear Studies, Inc. (for the year ending June 30, 1962).

<sup>14</sup> The name was in honor of the late General H. H. (Hap) Arnold, who commanded the U. S. Air Force in World War II.

<sup>15</sup> Named in honor of Dr. Theodore von Karman, one of the foremost aerodynamicists of the world.

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up to 20,000 pounds a square inch, and speeds from 1,000 to 18,000 miles per hour. The Propulsion Wind Tunnel makes it possible to test large-scale models and some full-size missiles and craft. In it altitudes from sea level to well above 100,000 feet can be reproduced. But the process of change still continues. At the beginning of 1962, plans included more than \$30,000,000 of new construction or modification. As a major effort there was the building of a vertical, rocket-testing cell to cost \$11,800,000. The cell, set 250 feet into the earth, will be used to test engines for the new Saturn rocket in simulated altitudes up to 350,000 feet.

The general public, as in the instance of the work at Oak Ridge, knows but little about the activity at the AEDC, for secrecy necessarily surrounds most of it. To the layman, it has been said, the Arnold scientists and computers have the answers for which there are no questions. Their testing and research have aided to speed man into space. Models of John Glenn's Mercury capsule, its many components, and its Atlas booster rocket all received testing by the AEDC in their early planning stages. Basically the task of the AEDC, performed on a budget reportedly of \$32,500,000 in 1962, is to save lives and money by discovering problems and flaws in design and structure before any actual launchings take place. A further purpose is to assist in the development of more advanced planes, missiles, and space vehicles.<sup>16</sup>

At Tullahoma man is carried to the threshold of outer space. Each test in the laboratories is likely to reveal not only valuable information pertinent to the particular problem under study but frequently material which man as yet does not completely comprehend. The AEDC is a natural focal point for advanced education as well as research in space science, and plans include the creation of the Tennessee Space Institute, to be located near the Center under the direction of the University of Tennessee.

Still another modern wonder of science came to realization in 1950 in Huntsville, Alabama, amid old cotton fields, loblolly pines

<sup>16</sup> From *Kitty Hawk to AEDC* and *Arnold Engineering Development Center* were used in this account and *The Nashville Tennessean*, April 29, 1962 (150th anniversary issue).



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and the traditions of the Old South. In the latter part of the nineteenth century Huntsville's greatest boast was the Jersey cow, Lily Flagg, which set the butterfat record for the United States and was the cause of a gala week-long party. The advent of the TVA, even though Huntsville is not directly on the Tennessee, brought the lift that it gave up and down the Valley in those despairing days of 1933. But all that is as nothing to what is happening now.

World War II saw the start of it, when the War Department selected Huntsville as the site for the Huntsville Arsenal of the Chemical Corps and the Redstone Arsenal of the Army Ordnance Department. Both went on standby basis at the close of the war and were consequently available when in 1949 the army rocket and guided-missile program had sufficiently progressed for the authorities to deem it advisable to decentralize management and operational activities. The selection of the Redstone-Huntsville complex for the purpose followed. In addition to planning and supervising the nationwide ordnance-missile activities, the staff of the arsenal was to operate facilities for research in solid propellants, free-flight rockets, and guided missiles. The German experts, who had come to the United States after the war, headed by Dr. Wernher von Braun, transferred to Huntsville and became the nucleus for the Guided Missile Development Division of the Ordnance Missile Laboratories.

In a re-organization February 1, 1956, it became the Army Ballistic Missile Agency with the responsibility of placing the intermediate-range ballistic missile, Jupiter, and the shorter range Redstone in operational status in a crash program. The intense space-race soon made Huntsville internationally known and gave increased reason for the community's nervous anxiety as it awaited the countdown for the first firing of Explorer I. When success attended it, Huntsville residents joined the personnel of the agency in an enthusiastic celebration.

A further change came July 1, 1960, when the Army Ballistic Missile Agency became the George C. Marshall Space Flight Center under the National Aeronautics and Space Administration with Dr. von Braun as director. It is the largest of NASA's field installations

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and is getting larger. One observer called it the “locomotive works of the U. S. non-military space program. It exists to invent and develop the brute rocket-power that will be needed to pull big payloads off the earth, place them in orbit, and kick them on into the outer void toward the moon and nearer planets.” One gets some idea of the huge scope of the program at the Marshall Center from its suggested 1963 budget of \$1,500,000,000, of which approximately 85% will go to private industry and research organizations.<sup>17</sup> Here again, the program has drawn the attention of an institution of higher education, and the University of Alabama plans the establishment of a multi-million-dollar Research Center to work with the scientists of the various installations at Huntsville.

Alongside the Marshall Center at Huntsville the Army Ordnance Missile Command developed and tested such military missiles as the Hawk, Pershing, and Nike-Hercules. In addition there is the ten-year-old Army Ordnance Guided Missile School, with facilities and equipment valued at more than \$73,000,000, where around 5,000 students from all branches of the United States Armed Forces and 15 Allied Nations receive training each year. For another responsibility the school prepared the textbooks and other training materials for use throughout the services, even though those who do the work have often found what they had prepared obsolete before being printed and distributed.<sup>18</sup>

The spectacular operations at Huntsville have had phenomenal results on the surrounding area and its residents. From 1950 to 1962 Huntsville grew in population from around 16,000 to approximately 85,000 persons. The students of the city school system increased in number from slightly more than 3,000 to just under 20,000. The teachers are said to complain that “Huntsville kids learn to count down before they can count up,” so completely is the community involved in the space age. “I thought Dr. von Braun was a nice fellow, when I first met him,” the mayor of Huntsville observed,

<sup>17</sup> Paul O’Neil, “The Splendid Anachronism of Huntsville,” *Fortune*, LXV (June 1962), 151-155+; *The George C. Marshall Space Flight Center*.

<sup>18</sup> “A Decade of Missile Progress,” U. S. Army Ordnance Guided Missile School.

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"but I thought he was crazy. Now I'm willing to believe anything he tells me, and if he says we're going to visit the planets and the moon, then that's what we're going to do."<sup>19</sup>

Throughout the modern world the problem of the present generation is to find some balance between the old way of life and the insistent demands of the new. TVA, Oak Ridge, Arnold, and Marshall mean national interest, national advancement, even national survival. Regional economics have necessarily become coordinated with those of the industrial world, for long-established local characteristics have been almost universally modified by machine-made goods, mass advertising, and instantaneous communication through television and radio with the sophisticated centers. What happens in distant areas, whether it be the introduction of a new style, or an aggressive act by one nation against another, or a decision with regard to the European Common Market, has its effects upon the economic life and the thinking of the people in the Chattanooga region.

One striking example of the changing economy concerns trees, which the pioneer, followed by generations of farmers and lumbermen, exploited without regard. But the TVA promoted reforestation and influenced the planting of more than 600,000,000 trees over 592,000 acres by 1960.<sup>20</sup> The development by Dr. Charles Holmes Herty in the 1930's of a process to remove resin made possible the use of pulp from Southern pines in the making of sulphite-blended papers. As a result the region around Chattanooga joined other areas of the South in finding interest in forest management and a new economic source of value. Additional impetus came in 1952 when the Bowaters Southern Paper Corporation opened at Calhoun, Tennessee, its huge \$55,000,000 plant, which it advertises as the largest newsprint plant in the world.

The lowly chicken also came to have a place in the changing economic picture of the region. By 1955 the editor of the *Georgia Poultry Times* boasted that "Georgia's biggest agricultural industry—

<sup>19</sup> O'Neil, *loc. cit.*; statistical data furnished by Huntsville Chamber of Commerce.

<sup>20</sup> TVA and Forestry, p. 6.



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homegrown and hustling—was cackling, crowing and flapping its wings.” Although the editor may have been more enthusiastic than statistics justified, the chicken-and-egg business had reached major proportions and startled natives could hardly believe that “a dad-blamed chicken could scratch cotton off the land.”<sup>21</sup> Chattanooga firms were among the pioneers in the creation of this new major activity, and before long some of the great grain companies of the Middle West established branches within the region.

Nor should cattle be ignored in this changing agricultural picture. Some have said that for the first time since the removal of the Cherokees, those who live on and by the land can take deep satisfaction in letting the grass grow under their feet. Aid has come from the Agricultural Experimental Stations of the state universities and from the TVA, where they have developed new grasses, better adapted to the growing conditions and the soil. As a result dairy and beef herds graze indolently where farmers once struggled to raise row crops.

Although there are still many areas where one cannot observe such gains and others where wildcat whisky seems to be the chief product and the art of tending a moonshine still a way of life, a tour of the countryside reveals a growing prosperity. No longer can one accept the saying that the region's people “are too poor to paint and too proud to whitewash.” Across the countryside in the gathering dusk one sees the universal, shining electric light in homes which display many signs of comfortable living. And to stimulate the residents of the scattered communities to fuller achievements local chambers of commerce aided by newspapers offer prizes in rural community improvement contests.

Urban economic life also dramatically reveals the great changes wrought by the invasion of technology and the steady absorption of small units by national corporations, with the result in some instances of the closing of a plant and the necessity for hundreds of employees to seek new jobs and to develop new skills. All this is evident in Chattanooga, although it has been balanced in some

<sup>21</sup> Thomas D. Clark, *The Emerging South*, pp. 86-90.

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degree by the opening of branches of such major firms as Dupont, Central Soya, and Quaker Oats, among others.

Residents have organized to seek such new industries and to create industrial parks for their use. The Southern Railroad has built a new, electronic freightyard, and the Louisville and Nashville, the successor to the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis, has re-located its yard, both with the idea of giving shippers improved service. The manufacturers of tufted textile products have turned largely to the manufacture of carpets; Combustion Engineering Company has become the major producer of atomic reactors for military and civilian use; and three television stations carry the major national networks through the area.

How much of the past will be preserved in the metamorphosis of the present into the future will depend in large measure on the standards of values of the area's leaders. There are, however, throughout the region a continuing stability and a sense of history. In November, 1962, the Provident Life and Accident Insurance Company, in celebration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of its founding, paid tribute to approximately fifty firms which had already passed the same birthday. Although some had changed names or become part of organizations of nationwide scope, each had demonstrated the necessary ability to adapt to changing times.

An interesting example of concern for tradition associated with modernity is the Jack Daniel Distillery of Lynchburg, Tennessee. Built in 1866 it is the oldest registered distillery in the country. For the years of the Prohibition era the distillery stood idle, but with the return of legal opportunity, it re-opened, with its production deliberately limited to 60 barrels a day. In World War II the company refused to blend its product, and when the government prohibited the use of higher quality grain for distilling purposes, it declined to purchase a lower grade.

Members of the same family owned it until 1956, when a larger distilling corporation purchased it. But the four Motlow brothers, great-nephews of Jack Daniel, still hold important executive positions and feel themselves responsible for the quality of the product. In this they have the assistance of the official taster, who is a tee-

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totaler. He is 83 years old and estimates he has controlled the quality of more than 117,000,000 gallons. He officially retired twenty years ago, but never a week goes by that he doesn't make at least one trip to the “hollow,” to be sure that things are as they should be.<sup>22</sup>

Throughout the Chattanooga country individuals and groups revisit scenes associated with the past, and not always have they been pleased with what they saw. The flux and change of America is often quite ruthless with antiquities, but interested individuals and groups are always vigilant and active in their labors for preservation. One such devoted effort resulted in the acquisition of the Russell Cave in North Alabama near Bridgeport as a National Monument. Some members of the Tennessee Archeological Society discovered the cave and brought it to the attention of the National Geographic Society, which purchased it and the surrounding acreage. Archeologists dug into it and uncovered remains which show that humans have used it for more than 9,000 years, thus making the “site one of the most important scientific archeological areas east of the Mississippi River.” For these reasons the National Geographic Society presented Russell Cave to the people of the United States through the National Park Service.<sup>23</sup>

Unusual personal effort and sacrifice also inspired the restoration of Fort Loudoun and of the Vann House at Spring Place. In a similar way it became possible carefully to take down bit by bit the John Ross home in Rossville and to move it to a nearby quiet ridge, where a master craftsman rebuilt it to stand as a symbol of the Cherokees and their struggle to remain in their native hills, a tragedy which in the form of Kermit Hunter's moving folk-play, *Unto These Hills*, has drawn large audiences to the natural theater near Cherokee, just across the Tennessee-North Carolina line.

On the bench of Lookout Mountain the same study and interested

<sup>22</sup> *The Nashville Tennessean*, April 29, 1962 (150th anniversary edition).

<sup>23</sup> Carl F. Miller, “Life 8,000 Years Ago Uncovered in an Alabama Cave,” *National Geographic Magazine*, Vol. CX (October 1956), 542-558; Carl F. Miller, “Russell Cave: New Light on Stone Age Life,” *National Geographic Magazine*, CXIII (March 1958), 427-438.



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concern went into the restoration of the Craven House, which stood in the midst of the area where the "Battle above the Clouds," fought on the slopes of the mountain, occurred. Below is the spectacular beauty of Moccasin Bend, recognized as virtually the trade mark of Chattanooga. Some promoters envisaged it as an ideal spot for an industrial park, but patriotic ladies had other thoughts and crusaded as only they can for the preservation of these famous acres. Ultimately they achieved success. The city and county governments acquired the land and dedicated it to public use amid fitting ceremonies, June 20, 1961.<sup>24</sup> Unfortunately, though, many other sites and some buildings have fallen victim to the contractors' bulldozers, or like the Brainerd Mission Cemetery find themselves crowded into obscurity by encroaching modern developments.

Since World War II Chattanooga's development has been largely in a similar pattern to the growth and change found in urban centers throughout the land. It continues to be the most heavily industrialized city in the Southeast, with the products of most of its factories aimed at national markets. As one result its economic growth in the 1950's was more a response to the expansion of those plants than to the development of new ones, something which has created a more striking picture in other Southern communities.

The three insurance companies with home offices in Chattanooga—Interstate Life and Accident Insurance Company, Provident Life and Accident Insurance Company, Volunteer State Life Insurance Company—have also reached beyond the immediate area to become genuinely national in scope. Their growth has given another economic stimulus to local development. But Chattanooga's wholesaling enterprises have undergone little change in this area, which has brought keener competition to the traditional one with Knoxville and Nashville. Chattanooga lies in the territory which because of the speed of motor-truck deliveries now feels the trade rivalries of four other outlets: Atlanta, Birmingham, Charlotte, and Memphis. As a further handicap Chattanooga's own hinterland is still sparsely

<sup>24</sup> Certificates of Distinction were presented by the United States Civil War Centennial Commission to the City of Chattanooga and to Hamilton County for their joint and successful efforts in the preservation of Moccasin Bend.

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populated. But Lookout Mountain, Missionary Ridge, Moccasin Bend, and Chickamauga continue to attract tourists, who come in increasing numbers and bring an estimated total of \$35,000,000 annually as a healthy addition to Chattanooga's economy.<sup>25</sup>

Although new buildings catch the eye in the downtown area, the usual thing is the opposite, the tearing down of old ones to create new parking areas for the constantly increasing number of automobiles. In part this is a consequence of the continuing migration to the suburbs, which in Chattanooga as elsewhere has been a comparable phenomenon to the onetime movement to the central area. It has been true of some factories, which have gone well into the country, and retail businesses as well as residents. Shopping centers fringe the developing suburban areas, some of which have incorporated as towns, and draw trade from the downtown stores.<sup>26</sup>

In order to meet the demands today for services and to be prepared for the increase which tomorrow will inevitably bring, Chattanooga with the aid of Federal funds has made elaborate plans under the firm and bold direction of Mayor P. R. Olgiati. Estimates are that in the last decade the city has spent \$83,000,000 for school and hospital additions, sewer improvements, freeway construction, and for the creation of the Golden Gateway. For the future, plans are already in the making for increased airport facilities, the relocation of the railroads, which so hinder downtown traffic, and the building of new stations, a city-beautiful project, and the construction of a new auditorium.

The Golden Gateway is the name given to the large urban renewal project consisting of 403 acres, on the west side of the downtown area. Talks with representatives of the Federal Government began in 1950, to be shortly followed by the appointment of a large committee of prominent citizens to care for local planning. In July 1958

<sup>25</sup> Hammer and Company Associates, *The Next Twenty Years: An Economic Basic Study of the Planning Region* (Research Report No. 6), pp. 1-23.

<sup>26</sup> Approximately 13,500 persons were added to the city's population by annexation of additional areas since 1950. Nevertheless, the census of 1960 reveals a slight decline (0.8%) to 130,009. The population of the metropolitan area increased 14.9% in the decade to 283,169.

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the city negotiated a contract for a grant and loan to cover the estimated \$20,000,000 the project will cost.

Cleaning up this tract called for the relocation of more than 1,000 families and the demolition of 1,170 buildings. Included within the area to be so radically changed were East Terrace, once among the community's most prominent residential sections, and Cameron Hill, which dominated the downtown area by its height and had historical interest because of its use by both the Confederate and Union armies. When plans disclosed that the intentions were to lower both heights as a source for earth to be used in freeway construction, few entered objections about East Terrace. Cameron Hill was a different matter and aroused supporters contested the action and even instituted court action to prevent its modification. These efforts proved, however, of no avail, and the removal of Cameron Hill's crown has proceeded according to plan, as has the sale of the property in the Golden Gateway for private and institutional use.<sup>27</sup>

The large and rather sudden relocation of families, many of them colored, from the West Side influenced residential patterns in sections of Chattanooga, where but few Negroes had previously lived. It also gave additional impetus to the already noticeable flow of white families to the suburbs. Naturally such marked population shifts had an immediate effect on school population and on shopping habits, as well as a more subtle influence on local politics.

Generally, politics in the mid-Twentieth Century reflected a mixture of new and traditional influences. In national elections the results usually followed the larger pattern. In 1952 and 1956 the magic of the Eisenhower name aided to bring out the latent Republicanism of the area, despite the fact that Estes Kefauver, a resident, was the vice-presidential candidate for the Democrats in 1956.<sup>28</sup> In 1960 the result was the same in the contest for the Presidency, but Senator

<sup>27</sup> In December, 1962, ground was broken by Olan Mills Studio for the first construction in the Golden Gateway.

<sup>28</sup> In November, 1956, President Eisenhower appointed Lawrence G. Derthick, then serving as Chattanooga's Superintendent of Schools to be U. S. Commissioner of Education.



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Kefauver won re-election with ease. In 1962 the G.O.P. by a vigorous effort elected a Congressional representative, W. E. Brock, III, for the first time since 1920.

City and county offices generally went to Democratic aspirants. Here the issues were regional or local: among them, the repeal of the state's anti-evolution law; the reapportionment of the seats in the legislature, left undone for better than sixty years; the effort of a disbarred judge to win elective office. More recently in Hamilton County the question of metropolitan government has become a point of active debate, dual city-county services appearing to be competitive and out-moded by the changing population patterns.

A vigorous spirit and growth of interest in the cultural welfare and improvement of the residents have accompanied all these evidences of accomplished and future change in government and physical background. The Art Association moved into a fine gallery on Bluff View in 1951, and on the opposite side of the Tennessee the Chattanooga Little Theater, which has a record of more than forty years of continuous production, constructed a new home in 1962. The musical organizations—the Chattanooga Symphony and Opera Associations, and the Chattanooga Music Club—continue to develop. The Adult Education Council has made its place secure as has the Frye Institute with its wide variety of programs. Newer groups include the Chattanooga Allied Arts Council and the Boys' Choir. Among the most interesting of all is the Plum-Nelly Art Festival, held each October on Lookout Mountain, “plum” out of Tennessee and “nelly” out of Georgia. Here artists and craftsmen of varying degrees of sophistication display their creations to large crowds in holiday mood. Ever present in all these activities is the University of Chattanooga, which one Chamber of Commerce spokesman singled out as the “most treasured” asset of the area.

The Benwood Foundation, since its creation in 1950, has been the greatest single factor in promoting and assisting cultural institutions and philanthropic causes in the Chattanooga region. Established by the will of George Thomas Hunter it has quietly given encouragement in the form of generous grants to artistic, educational, humanitarian, and religious activities. It was the donor's wish that the

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Foundation would enrich in every possible way the life of the community and the area which had been his home.

George T. Hunter came to Chattanooga in 1904, when he joined his uncle, Ben F. Thomas, in the Coca-Cola Bottling Company.<sup>29</sup> Eleven years later he became president of the company and in 1941, chairman of the board. The Benwood Foundation, which he so generously created and endowed, has been of inestimable value to the area. Its benefactions, whether large or small, have generally been anonymous, in keeping with the character of its modest, generous founder.

The same year the Benwood Foundation came into being, Garrison and Mose Siskin established the Siskin Foundation in memory of their parents who emigrated from Russia to Chattanooga in 1890. The Foundation erected a complex of buildings to include a non-denominational chapel, space for community cultural, civic, and charitable activities and a rehabilitation center which comprises dental and physical therapy clinics, and speech and hearing work. The services offered at the center, partly or totally financed by the Foundation, include treatment of the physically handicapped of all ages. They include pre-school children with brain damage, cerebral palsy, and emotional disturbances. The brothers take great pride in this rehabilitation work and for their contribution they have won regional, national and international recognition including the seldom-given President's Distinguished Service Award for encouraging and procuring the employment of the physically handicapped.<sup>30</sup>

In its humanitarian work the Siskin Center recognizes no limiting barriers, and for years there had been little evidence in the community generally of bitter racial differences. By mid-century the city employed Negroes on the police force and the Public Library had opened its facilities to all citizens. Even so, Chattanooga, like the South generally, viewed with dubious feeling the 1954 decision of

<sup>29</sup> *Supra*, p. 338.

<sup>30</sup> See Sidney Shalett: "They're Giving Away Their Fortune," *Saturday Evening Post*, 233 (November 12, 1960), 38-39+. The public in 1961, through a subsidiary organization, the 365 Club, began to contribute funds to assist the valuable work of the Siskin Foundation. This aid made it possible to secure a large area of adjoining property for the future expansion of the Center.

## “... On the Same Street”

the United States Supreme Court, which called for the desegregation of public schools with “all reasonable speed.” Nevertheless, the Chattanooga Board of Education as early as January 1955 announced its intentions to comply with the decree, only to have incidents at a meeting called in March of the next year to discuss the matter cause the Board to decide to “set aside steps toward integration. . . .”

Within the next few years violence struck in the neighboring communities of Clinton, in the hill country west of Knoxville, and Nashville, when desegregated schools opened. Hecklers and haters, inspired by the notorious John Kasper, temporarily trampled law and order. Even after things had seemingly quieted at Clinton, with students of both races in daily peaceful attendance, a dynamite explosion in the middle of the night destroyed the school building and revealed the bitter determination of the segregationists to oppose integration. But evidence of equal firmness on the part of the authorities and the sentencing of Kasper to prison for his activities in both Nashville and Clinton ended that phase of the matter and the two school systems have operated without trouble since.

In Chattanooga three Negroes petitioned the Board of Education to permit their children to register at schools previously attended exclusively by whites. Denial of the petition led to an appeal to the Federal courts. In this period the atmosphere became additionally charged with bitterness over the South generally by the effort of the Negroes to force variety-store lunch-counters to serve them. In February, 1960, Chattanooga Negroes made their first “sit-in,” as the newspapers termed it. Near riotous mobs gathered on the downtown streets, and tension verged on the breaking-point. A firm stand by Mayor Olgiati, other city officials, the police, and firemen, who went into action with hoses, dispersed the crowds. Arrests of a few leaders, some black, some white, put an end to the disorder, and by August a committee of business leaders and other citizens devised a satisfactory program for opening the lunch-counters to both races.

In the meantime, after detailed deliberation the Federal courts approved the plan of the Chattanooga Board of Education for the desegregation of the Chattanooga schools, beginning in the fall of 1962. It called for the admittance of Negro students to the first three



## The Chattanooga Country

grades of sixteen schools at that time and an annual broadening of admissions in the future. The Hamilton County Board of Education immediately announced that it would voluntarily initiate a similar program for county schools at the same time.

Citizens from all walks of life were determined that this eventful transition should be peacefully accomplished. A committee, which comprised ministers of all denominations, members of civic clubs, and others, under the chairmanship of William E. Brock, Jr., joined city and county officials in a vast educational campaign in preparation for the change. Individuals from other Southern cities, which had successfully mastered the crisis, came to Chattanooga to help.

On August 29, 1962, Negro students registered at six formerly all-white schools in the city and on the next day at two county schools. When classes settled down, forty-four Negro children were in attendance at the city schools and fourteen in the county. Calm prevailed throughout. Preoccupation with the problem gave way to a sense of satisfaction in the manner the area had met the challenge. Shortly after, the communication satellite, Telstar, relayed a television news summary of this Chattanooga story to European viewers.

Within a few months the Board of Trustees of the University of Chattanooga also voluntarily changed the admission policy of the institution. On February 25, 1963, it voted to open summer graduate programs to all qualified students.

The use of the most recent advance in wireless transmission to tell how Chattanooga dealt with an ancient problem is significant in the story of the Chattanooga country. The history of the region measures its steps and slips from the days of European expansion into the New World until the present, when in several of its communities men stand on the threshold of accomplishments which astound the imagination. New experiences and opportunities in ever-increasing numbers lie in the future along with issues born in the past. The citizens of the area stand ready to face both as they look steadily toward tomorrow with its mysterious and magnificent challenges.

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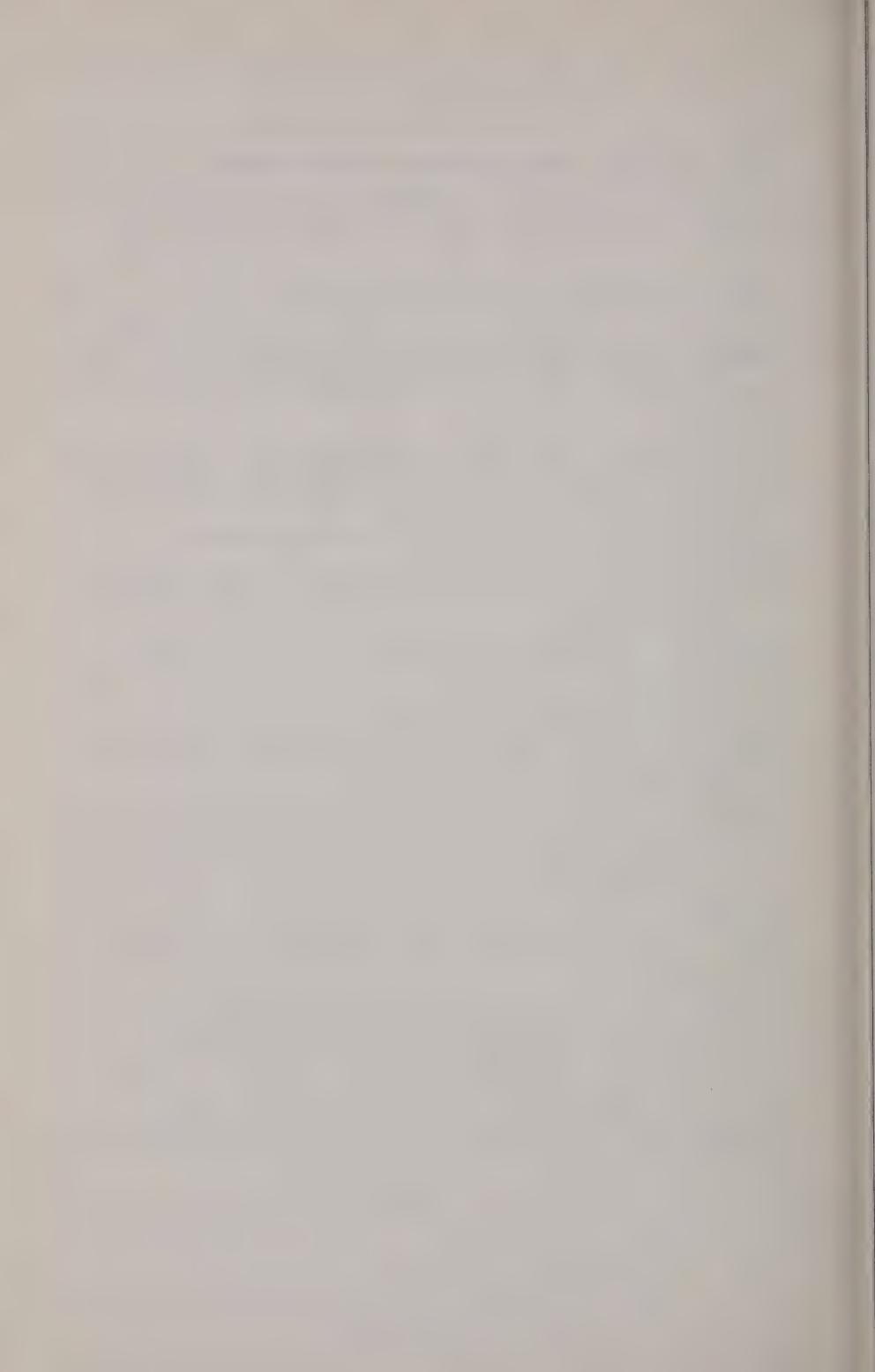


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## *Acknowledgments*

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THIS volume was made possible in part by grants-in-aid allocated by a research committee of the University of Chattanooga from funds made jointly by the University and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

In the research for and writing of the book, the authors are grateful for the assistance of the following individuals:

In the research for and the writing of this book, the authors are grateful for the assistance of the following: Mrs. Penelope J. Allen, Mrs. Kathryn P. Arnold, Ray W. Atkinson, Creed F. Bates, Morrow Chamberlain, Edward Y. Chapin, Sr., William Crutchfield, Jimmie Deck, Jesse Dugger, States R. Finley, John P. Fort, Bernard L. Foy, Franklin Garret, Jo Conn Guild, Earl D. Hale, DeSales Harrison, Charles Hon, George T. Hunter, Mrs. Anne Bachman Hyde, John B. Hyde, David A. Lockmiller, Cartter Lupton, Thomas F. X. McCarthy, Lewis Marks, LeRoy A. Martin, James U. Nichols, Milton B. Ochs, Reavis O'Neal, Jr., Frank Orend, Z. Cartter Patten, Lupton Patten, Nancy Poole, Wayne Powell, Frank W. Prescott, Dale Rieger, J. Quintus Shepherd, Culver H. Smith, Samuel G. Stoney, Mrs. Clara B. Washburn, Bertie Wenning, H. F. Wiltse.

We also wish to make grateful recognition of the assistance of the members of the staffs of the following institutions:

The College of the City of Charleston Library; Chattanooga Public Library; Georgia State Department of Archives and History; The Lawson-McGhee Library, Knoxville; The Tennessee State Library; The National Archives.

## Acknowledgments

We wish to express appreciation to the following persons and firms for permission to reprint material as indicated:

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